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ON AND STRESS-RELATED ILLNESS AMONG
SECONDARY TEACHERS

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Abstract

EMOTION AND STRESS-RELATED ILLNESS AMONG SECONDARY TEACHERS

Over the last decade there have been sharp increases in recorded levels of occupational stress. Reports of the growing incidence of stress-related illness within the teaching profession continue, the numbers of teachers pursuing litigation to secure compensation for injury to health increasing. Based on qualitative empirical data gathered from in-depth longitudinal interviews guided by humanist counselling frameworks, this study focuses on the phenomenological experiences of 21 secondary school teachers (and their families) diagnosed as suffering stress-related illness. It shows how stress cascaded through school systems from government directives to the chalkface, and on into family systems, leading, in some cases, to family burnout. Analysis through the sociology and psychology of emotion emphasises the central position of emotions in the aetiology of stress-related illness. This research shows that emotions are social processes, playing a vital role as communicators both to the self and to others. Emotional climates within schools and the home, individual and organisational emotional competencies, emotional labouring, emotion management and emotion rules were key themes contributing to the experience of stress-related illness. This study finally deals with the struggle for survival and identity reconstruction processes within the self-renewal journey. Some teachers, profoundly damaged by the experience of stress, were unable to return to the teaching world. Some emerged with a renewed and strengthened sense of self. Implications are drawn regarding student achievement, individual and collective emotional literacy, and the retention, training and professional development of teachers.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ATL: Association of Teachers and Lecturers

AWIRS: Australian Workplace and Industrial Relations Survey

BERA: British Educational Research Association

DfEE: Department for Education and Employment

EBD: Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

ESAC: Education Service Advisory Committee

GNVQ: General National Vocational Qualifications

GP: General Practitioner

HASAWA: Health and Safety at Work Act

HoD: Head of Department

HSE: Health and Safety Executive

MHSW: Management of Health and Safety at Work

NAHT: National Association of Head Teachers

NASUWT: National Association of Schoolmasters and Women Teachers

NUT: National Union of Teachers

NQT: Newly Qualified Teacher

NWN: National Work-stress Network

PMT: Pre-Menstrual Tension

SEN: Special Educational Needs

SMT: Senior Management Team

TBF: Teachers' Benevolent Fund

TUC: Trade Union Council

UNILO: United Nations International Labour Organisation

INTRODUCTION

In this introduction I consider the rise of occupational stress, the rise of teacher stress, and autobiographical data influencing the research process. I also cover conceptual clarification and give a brief outline of chapters.

The Rise of Occupational Stress

Stress is an inevitable fact of post-modern life (Newton, 1995; Unites Nations International Labour Organisation (UNILO), 2000), acknowledged as an occupational hazard (Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 1995), and designated 'the 20th Century plague, the disease of our time' (Cooper, 2000). In the post-modern global economy, 'characterised by accelerating change, intense compression of time and space, cultural diversity, technological complexity, national insecurity and scientific uncertainty' (Hargreaves, 1994: 3), stress levels are reportedly reaching epidemic proportions (Rees, 1997; Montague, 1996), overall life stress increasing by 45 per cent over the last 40 years (Evans, 1999).

Stress and burnout have been topics of major international concern for several decades (Cooper and Payne, 1993). According to the Australian Workplace and Industrial Relations Survey (AWIRS) (1995), '... it is worrying to discover that 26 per cent of workers who reported an injury or illness felt that they suffered from stress while at work in the last 12 months, and that this percentage rises markedly in certain sectors (for example, 47 per cent for finance and insurance industry and 44 per cent for education industry)'. In 1996, the European Commission identified work stress as one of several emerging new health and safety risks (UNILO, 2000), a survey of 15

member states revealing 28 per cent of European workers, around 40 million workers, considered their health adversely affected by workplace stress, at an estimated cost of Euro 20 billion annually (European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, 2000). The UNILO (2000), in a landmark survey of stress in the workplace across the United Kingdom, The United States of America, Germany, Poland and Finland, reported record levels of stress, with anxiety, burnout and depression spiralling out of control. The prevention of stress has become a primary aspect of the UNILO's goal regarding the promotion of '*opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity*' (Somavia, 1999, italics in original).

Stress at work has become a major problem for employees and employers (Robertson, Cooper and Williams, 1990), with high costs in terms of lower performance, workers' health and absenteeism, and serious implications for national financial resources. The Institute of Management statistics (1996) reported 270,000 people taking time off daily due to stress-related illness, costing £7 billion annually (UK National Work-stress Network (NWN), 1998: 9). It has been estimated that 25 per cent of NHS annual drugs and medication bill and 14 per cent of in-patient costs result from stressed workers (NWN, 2000). Stress was considered 'a significant factor in forcing people to give up their jobs early', with 73 per cent of fire officers, 49 per cent of police officers, 33 per cent of NHS staff, 25 per cent of teachers and 20 per cent of civil servants retiring for medical reasons between 1991-92 and 1996-97 (Millar, 1999: 12). On August 5th 1999, the Treasury ordered a full-scale inquiry into the estimated £1 billion pounds per annum spent on ill-health retirement within the public sector, taxpayers spending an average of £35,000 each on the 25,000 staff taking pensions early (Baldwin, 1999).

November 1st 2000 was designated National Stress Awareness Day to raise the nation's consciousness of the extent of the problem.

Employers are increasingly aware of the risks of litigation concerning personal injury actions resulting from workplace stress (Earnshaw and Cooper, 1996; Palmer, 1996). They have a legal duty of care towards their employees regarding psychiatric injury (Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAWA) 1974; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSW) 1992; Rogers and Rayment, 1995), and must ensure:

Health is not placed at risk through excessive and sustained levels of stress arising from the way work is organised, the way people deal with each other at their work or from the day-to-day demands placed on their workplace. Employers should bear stress in mind when assessing possible health hazards in their workplaces, keeping an eye out for developing problems and being prepared to act if health problems seem likely. ... Stress should be treated like any other health hazard. (HSE, 1995: 8)

Despite extensive research into stress and burnout for several decades, the high profile given to stress and stress-related illness, and increasing professional advice for employers on avoiding accusations of causing employee injury, few employers are tackling this issue (Shillaker, 1997). There have been increasing numbers of cases seeking compensation for work stress, union cases during 1999 rising to 783, an increase of 70 per cent over the previous year (Dodd, 2000), with the TUC supporting almost 500 cases (Frean, 1999). Teacher stress in particular has received much attention, teaching being one of Britain's most stressful occupations (Travers and Cooper, 1996).

The Rise of Teacher Stress

There is increasing concern regarding the effects of prolonged negative occupational stress on teachers, which has far-reaching costs and consequences for education - on the state, on educational institutions, on teachers, pupils and on teacher-pupil relationships. Teaching has been viewed as a high stress occupation for many years (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1977; Education Service Advisory Committee, 1990; Travers and Cooper, 1996). The incidence of stress is reported as rising (Troman & Woods, 2001). An increasing stream of letters and articles in the educational press gives voice to both teacher and teacher families' accounts of teacher stress (Sloan, 1996; Want, 1996; Hampshire, 1997; Robson, 1997; Shepherd, 1998; Tonks, 1999; Paterson, 1999).

It has been estimated that the annual cost of stress to the Education Service is around £230 million (Brown and Ralph, 1998). Woodward (2000) reports DfEE statistics as showing that 60 per cent of full-time teachers took absence through ill-health in 1999. While the average teacher's absence was nine days, 44 per cent had sick leave of at least twenty days, resulting in a loss of 2.5 million working days costing £3 million. Reducing teacher absence has become a DfEE priority (*Education Journal*, 1999). By 2002, the government aims to reduce teachers' sick leave by 30 per cent (Woodward, 2000). In September 1999, Estelle Morris, Minister for Schools, launched Teacherline (established by the Teachers' Benevolent Fund (TBF), the Teacher Support Network, and partly funded by the DfEE), a free, independent and totally confidential counselling service, to cope with rising complaints of stress, with projected savings of £18 million (Berki and Hook, 1999).

There have been widespread reports of a 'crisis' of recruitment and retention within the profession (Dean, 2000), growing numbers of teachers having retired early with stress-related ill-health (Smithers and Robinson, 1998). Travers and Cooper (1996), conducting a national survey of 1790 teachers, of which 1120 were secondary teachers, found two-thirds had actively considered leaving teaching within the previous five years. Teacher retirements, on the grounds of ill-health, rose from 2698 in 1985/86 to 6075 in 1994/95 (Robinson, 1997). In 1996, 13,000 teachers left teaching early, an increase of 50 per cent on 1986 (Rafferty, 1997). In 1997, 37.4 per cent of vacancies in secondary schools were reported as due to ill-health retirement (Salmon, 1997). Early retirement was estimated as annually costing £480 million (Robinson, 1997). In response, the Government altered pension rules in 1997, making it more difficult for teachers to retire early, prompting fears of an 'ageing, sick profession' (Rafferty, 1997). Teacher unions report 'a torrent of stress claims pending' (Comerford and Mansell, 1999), the National Association of Schoolmasters and Women Teachers (NASUWT) at the time of writing handling 120 cases, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) 180 cases, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) 40 cases, and the NAHT 25 cases (Henry, 2000). A growing number of teachers have secured compensation for stress-related illness (Bunting, 1999). Teacher stress has thus become 'a serious problem for the local authorities, governing bodies and the Government itself to tackle' (Clayton, 1999).

I will now consider some autobiographical features of importance in both the choice of this area for doctoral study, and in the chosen methodology. Further details can be found in Carlyle (2000) (reproduced in Appendix 1).- }

Autobiography

It is one's inner experiences that permit gaining a full grasp of what is involved in the inner experiences of others, a knowledge which then can become the basis for theoretical studies. (Bettelheim, 1990: 38)

Personal biographies greatly influence one's life work, our life experiences lending focus to particular areas of interest, or causing us to avoid others. We may use our adult work to work through our own conflicts, to increase our understanding of our own biographies, or to help others (Pyrañty, 1996). Childhood and adolescent experiences may have a life-long impact with global consequences, as Alice Miller's (1987, 1991) comprehensive study linking Hitler's early socialisation with the rise of Nazism demonstrates. Bruno Bettelheim's (1970, 1990) experiences within Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps, powerfully described in *The Informed Heart*, shook him out of his 'earlier dogmatic psychological slumbers', leading him to focus much of the rest of his life on developing ways of healing severely disturbed children. Many researchers investigating medical problems have personal experiences in their chosen field. For example, Drs. Richard Bruno, Henry Holland, Mary Westbrook and Eddie Bollenbach, exploring the Late Effects of Polio and Post-polio Syndrome, are themselves polio survivors. In Appendix 1, I discuss how diverse personal experiences can provide access to a voice repertoire essential to the research task.

I have a large personal investment in the study of stress, which stems both from biographical experiences, and from observations of the experiences of others. My own biography leads to me to agree with Handy (1995) that, while there undoubtedly are personal dimensions to the stress experience, many of these factors can be better

understood as partly the product of both social and structural forces, and partly due to agency, rather than as intrinsic to the individual personality.

Early childhood trauma gives me an understanding of the influence of childhood experiences on adult lives. I was hospitalised in an isolation unit with polio at the age of two. The practices of the time dictated separation from family with no contact due to the misguided notion that this would help us 'settle in'. Here, I experienced the protest, despair, detachment and subsequent depression suffered by children in hospitalisation studies (Quinton and Rutter, 1976). One of the myths prevalent in some Scottish communities in the 1950's was that disability was a result of sin, either of the individual or the parents. This led to much bullying and isolation from peers. The trauma of these early years remained hidden until reawakened in 1997 when weakening bodily function led to a diagnosis of post-polio syndrome, and the resurgence of childhood memories of abuse from medical staff.

Teaching experience resulted in my first experience of workplace stress. From an early age, I wanted to teach primary school children. Several stays in hospital led to a wish to study medicine. As a working class female, I felt this to be outside my capability. I chose to study the piano, my goal, individual piano teaching within a secondary school, a common practice in Scotland at that time. During my first week at college I was shocked to discover that in order to obtain teacher status, I had to spend two years teaching class music in a secondary school. This experience, in an Edinburgh city comprehensive in the early 70's, was disheartening and distressing.

During teacher training, or early teaching experience, stress was never mentioned. My first year of teaching coincided with the raising of the school leaving age from 15 to 16

years. I was given a group of these youngsters who greatly resented that extra year in school. There were few structured lessons planned for them. Qualified only in class music, I was responsible for teaching them Mathematics and English, with no help from either faculty. During one illuminating lesson in my second week, teaching English in a music room with no desks, where each teenager brought one pencil, one piece of paper, and one book dated 1932 from which they were expected to copy out and do a comprehension exercise, the top plastic covering was ripped off my cupboards for the full length of the room. The boys swung from the ceiling lights. The following day I was given my head of department's (HoD) room, which had a telephone with which to call for help. My HoD, with severe alcohol problems, which became increasingly evident as each school day progressed and control disintegrated within his classroom, was unable to provide me with the necessary support. As a polio survivor, my physical limitations meant I was unfit to stand all day. Within a few months I was exhausted. Seeking help from my general practitioner, I was given tranquillizers and told to 'pull myself together'. Within a short period, I had changed profoundly, having lost a great deal of my confidence and creativity. I firmly believed I was not suited to secondary teaching.

I had my first experience of industrial action in this secondary school. In the early seventies, there was much industrial unrest in many occupations, teachers seeking improved pay and working conditions. At a staff meeting, it was decided that, rather than have all members of staff taking strike action, the school could not function with the loss of just nine teachers. The 'cheaper' teachers, myself among them, were chosen, and later paid by the more experienced staff, to strike for a restructured salary system. Teacher resistance forced many schools to close for several weeks, until this action was deemed successful, and a new conditions of service agreement was reached.

With the help of tranquillizers, I lasted out my two years before taking a part-time peripatetic post teaching music in primary schools. Here, I had complete autonomy over my work, and lovable children to work with. It was extremely satisfying, and exhausting, but great fun. Marriage and childrearing took me out of teaching. While the children grew up, interdisciplinary studies with the Open University, Warwick University, and Leicester University broadened psychological, sociological, feminist and counselling theoretical understandings, increasing the number and quality of voices available to me (see Appendix 1). In 1993 I spent a year researching with the Department of General Practice in Leicester. This was a very supportive environment. At this time, GPs were being asked to implement clinical audit. One of my tasks was to interview those who were unwilling to undertake these actions. Some of their main reasons included resistance to taking on increased workloads, and fears of loss of control within their professional practice.

I returned to teaching in 1994, taking a part-time post in a sixth form, part of a consortium of four secondary schools. This post was deemed 'hard to fill', my ulterior motive being to obtain local authority housing, post marital separation, where my sons and I had been left financially insecure. I taught A-level Psychology and Advanced General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) Health and Care, which I enjoyed immensely. I had a strong vocational commitment, and the benefits of a high degree of autonomy over both curriculum delivery and classroom management.

Based in 'Castlerigg' comprehensive, which was suffering from the stressful effects of a recent schools' merger (Draper, 1992, Kyriacou and Harriman, 1993; McHugh and Kyle, 1993), I was well placed to both observe and experience workplace stress. During the next two years, I saw many emotional confrontations between members of staff,

between students, between teachers and students, and between teachers and parents in school. My students, as part of the psychology curriculum, carried out quantitative projects into stress with peers, teachers, and parents. They were surprised at the high scores they found, especially with teachers. Within these four schools there were very different departmental and faculty cultures, and wide variations in how staff communicated and cared for each other. I saw a profession under great pressure from all directions, from the media, from government and local authorities, from school managers and families, and from life histories. I listened to colleagues' stories. I took more notice of media references to stress. I observed my own and others' emotion. These observations of stress within school challenged prevalent individualistic views. Teachers I knew who left teaching through stress-related illness were not 'non-hardy' individuals (Kobasa, 1979). There was a great deal missing from explanations of stress.

At times, despite loving this job, I too experienced great stress. As a new single parent, full-time employment seemed essential. To fill my timetable, in September 1995, I took on additional responsibilities as a special needs assistant. Here, I was appalled at the poor professional provision for these students. I felt their educational and social needs were not being addressed. With no specialist training or professional support, my feelings of competency diminished. Teaching special needs entailed walking to a different part of the building for each period, an onerous task for a polio survivor. I became increasingly exhausted, increasingly distressed. Only seven weeks into this second year, I was too exhausted to continue. Discussing this with my GP, I discovered I had been distressed for some time without realising it. In taking extra responsibilities, I had altered the balance between resources and demands, and had to accept that at the age of 43, my body was wearing down. My GP's suggestion was that to avoid illness, I

should teach part-time and seek alternative avenues of employment. The headteacher in 'Castlerigg' was very supportive, and accepted reversion to part-time status.

Critical incidents, 'highly charged moments and episodes that have enormous consequences for personal change and development' (Sikes, Measor and Woods, 1985: 230), are one of the major triggers of stress-related illness. They may involve challenges to identity claims of being a 'proper' teacher. A critical event, the Dunblane tragedy, which took place near my home, in March 1996, was the turning point for me, leading to a re-assessment of my identity as a teacher, and a change in career path. This external event triggered an emotional response in the teaching community. It triggered an overwhelming emotional response in me, which erupted in a school situation.

Within 'Castlerigg' pupils had designated internal areas where they were allowed to socialize. They did not take this school rule seriously. School management did not have an appropriate policy to deal with rule breakage. One day each week, part of my work was to patrol the English block ejecting pupils who should not have been there before the first bell. The same children were found inside every day. The same children, when ejected, ran around to the next set of doors and up another flight of stairs. The same children received detentions and refused to attend. It had become a game. I had been getting more and more distressed by this pointless exercise, with which I received no help from senior staff. The morning following the Dunblane shooting, I lost control of my emotions. It was extremely rare for me to lose my temper in school. When told to 'fuck off' by a particularly disruptive 13-year-old, I told him: 'Perhaps someone should shoot you'. I was shocked by my response. He turned a surprised face to me, saying: 'You're crazy'. It felt 'crazy'. This seemingly minor transaction precipitated a period of emotional turmoil. I realised I was not coping with part-time teaching either. This

was the trigger to a change in my lifestyle. Individualized stress discourses common in school did not fully explain what was happening to me. I analysed my own experiences. Prevalent individualistic ideas of stress management were not the answer for me. I re-examined my husband's experiences of organisational stressors in the agricultural field. Disempowered, he was unable to change situational pressures and disturbing social transactions within the organisation he had recently joined, which precipitated a breakdown. Stress management was not the answer for him.

Thus began my interest in stress, stress-related illness and emotion. This research has arisen partly from my own experiences, encompassing reflections on the contrasting periods of my own life, those experienced as autonomous, and those experienced as outside personal control, and partly through observations of teaching, and listening to teachers' voices in school. I wanted to give teachers voice (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992; Francis, 1997), and add to the body of sociological research on teachers' working conditions, my aim to 'emphasise the subjective conscious responses of teachers to the objective conditions which shape their work' (Gewirtz, 1996: 3). Recent work on teacher stress has used mainly large-scale quantitative methodology, complemented by single individual interviews (Travers and Cooper, 1996; Ralph and Brown, 1998). Like Troman and Woods' (2001) work in primary schools, I wanted to focus on the relationship between teachers' feelings about their working and personal lives, and the levels of stress and stress-related illness encountered. In particular I wanted to explore how teachers felt about emotional transactions with colleagues, students, parents and family members, and their perceptions of the relationship between collective and personal emotion within their school organisation.

| Clarification of Concepts

Before proceeding further it is necessary to give some explanation of the terms used in this thesis.

Stress

Stress has been defined in a variety of ways. The term 'stress' has been used to conceptualise both cause and effect, resulting in much research into stress being plagued with definitional ambiguity and measurement problems (Pithers, 1995). The word 'stress' is derived from the Latin 'stringere' meaning to 'draw tight'. During the 17th century it came into common usage to describe hardship or affliction. Stress has often been characterized as a 'primitive stone-age reaction to modern organizational and social factors, known as stressors' (UNILO, 2000). Throughout the 20th century, much attention was paid to researching stress from an individual perspective, developing theoretical models derived from individual psychological processes, where demands outstrip resources (Hardy and Thomas, 1998).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) adopt a more cognitive interactional model with a greater emphasis on process. They propose that stress is more usefully viewed as an 'organizing concept for understanding a wide range of phenomena of great importance in human and animal adaptation', where stress 'is not a variable, but rather a rubric consisting of many variables and processes' (ibid: 111-12). Psychological stress was defined here as 'a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her wellbeing' (ibid: 19). Stress, here, is caused neither by individual

susceptibility, nor by external factors, but by a relationship that is highly dependent on cognitive appraisal.

In the last 20 years, more attention has been focused on environmental factors and organisational processes. Pearlin (1989), from a sociological perspective, argues that stress is a dynamic process. He proposes greater attention be paid to longitudinal observations, and to social and structural contexts. Primary risk factors here are constellations of chronic negative stressors, unrelieved by positive stressors (see below), which accumulate from the interaction of work pressures, family pressures, and environmental demands. Some view stress as a 'dynamic relational concept' with 'constant interplay between the person and the environment which is mediated by a complex set of ongoing cognitive processes' (Travers and Cooper, 1996: 18). Others give less prominence to individual cognition, seeing stress more as a transactional process (Bartlett, 1998), expanding the understanding of the environment as an active force shaping outcomes, which is constrained by the state and potentialities of the individuals involved (Sameroff, 1987).

In this study I propose to use The European Commission's (2000) definition of work stress as 'the emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological reaction to aversive and noxious aspects of work, work environments and work organisations. It is a state characterised by high levels of arousal and distress and often by feelings of not coping.' In viewing stress as response, as an outcome of both social and psychological forces, it becomes clearer that there are both positive and negative aspects to stress. Stress in moderation is an important motivational factor. Positive stress, or 'Eustress' (Selye, 1974) is energising. Characterised by 'a healthy sense of being stretched and challenged and sufficiently well-supported to meet the challenge', it enhances

performance (Veninga and Spradley, 1993: 37). A necessary part of everyday life, positive stress arousal assists adaptation and growth, evoking passion, galvanising the spirit, and inspiring individuals towards peak experiences (Patmore, 1997). Lazarus and Lazarus (1994) suggest that health and well-being may be generated and maintained by the distribution of positive stress hormones. Positive emotion such as relief, happiness, pride and love may be instrumental in promoting bodily equanimity and both protecting against, and curing, illness and disease.

However, while stress may protect and motivate, when experienced as continuous, and without supportive balancing mechanisms, stress becomes pathological (UNIL0, 2000). Distress can result from both under-stimulation leading to 'rustout' and over-stimulation leading to 'burnout' (Hopkins, 1997). This study views stress as an important contribution to the dynamic equilibrium of health and well-being, and is concerned mainly with stress in its negative sense.

Burnout

Empirical work by Maslach in the 1980's revealed burnout to be a psychological and social phenomenon of particular concern among those in person-centred employment, where the provider/client relationship is central, and service provision can be highly emotional. Burnout is a multidimensional construct, comprising three distinct, empirically related components:

- emotional exhaustion: 'feelings of being emotionally overextended and depleted of one's emotional resources',

- depersonalisation: 'a negative, callous or excessively detached response to other people, who are usually recipients of one's service or care', and
- reduced personal accomplishment: 'a decline in one's feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work' (Maslach, 1993: 21).

There is much debate on the relationship between stress and burnout. Burnout has frequently been seen as a result of, or a response to, stress. Pines et al (1981: 15 *et al*) emphasise the emotional and relational dimensions, burnout being 'the result of constant or repeated *emotional pressure* associated with an intense involvement with *people* over long periods of time'. For Kelchtermans (1995: 2), burnout constitutes a 'specific type of prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job'. Others link burnout with the failure to cope, as 'the final step in a progression of unsuccessful attempts to *cope* with a variety of stress conditions' (Farber, 1991: 32).

In this research I follow Veninga and Spradley's (1981: 6-7) view of burnout as primarily caused by 'unrelieved stress, the kind that goes on day after day, month after month, year after year a debilitating psychological condition which results in depleted energy resources, lowered resistance to illness, increased dissatisfaction and pessimism, increased absenteeism and inefficiency at work'. Veninga and Spradley conceive the stress/burnout process as consisting of five stages.

Stage One: Eustress, characterised by a period of high energy, and job satisfaction, with a sense of challenge, creativity and pride.

Stage Two: Fuel shortage, characterized by dissatisfaction and inefficient performance, sleep disturbances, and avoidance behaviours.

Stage Three: The development of chronic symptoms. Here, earlier symptoms become habitual and new symptoms emerge. There is chronic exhaustion, anger and depression, individuals becoming 'volcanoes always on the verge of eruption' (ibid: 61).

Stage Four: Crisis. In this stage four significant changes occur - symptoms become critical, individuals become obsessed with their frustrations, increased pessimism and self-doubt abound, and an 'escape mentality' develops as despair blankets perceptions and individuals feel like 'trapped animals' (ibid: 70).

Stage Five: Hitting the wall. This refers to the 20-mile mark in marathon running where the runner's glycogen levels are depleted and energy plummets. Individuals lose control of their lives, and usually need external help to recover.

In accordance with much social psychological and sociological research, I view individual burnout as primarily a social and cultural phenomenon (Bartlett, 1998; Sarason, 1996). As Freudenberger, who first brought the term to public consciousness, proposed, society can be seen as the 'breeder' of burnout through 'eroding tradition, banishing our support systems, barricading minority groups, and dissolving relationships' (Freudenberger and Richelson, 1980: 198), creating an environment where 'energy has turned to ennui, the enthusiasm into anger, the optimism to despair' (ibid: xiv). Stress and burnout are thus highly emotional experiences.

Stress and Emotion

Stress and emotion are 'intimately connected' (Lazarus & Lazarus, 1994: 238). As Eisler and Blalock (1991) argue, the experience of stress generates much distressing

emotion, such as anger, anxiety, guilt, shame, and sadness. Wilkinson (1996: 184) points out how stress emotions, such as ‘a sense of desperation, anger, bitterness, learned helplessness or aggression’, are ‘all wholly understandable responses to various social, economic and material difficulties’.

Emotions are:

Thinking, moving, feeling “complexes” which, sociologically speaking, are relational in nature and linked to “circuits of selfhood”; comprising both corporeal, embodied aspects, as well as socio-cultural ones embodied existential modes of being; ones which centrally involve self-feelings as the “inner-core” of human emotionality and an active engagement with the world.

(Williams, 1998: 124)

According to Crawford et al (1992: 37), emotions are ‘produced in people’s attempts to make sense of their world, in their efforts to appropriate and resist the structures of their everyday lives: they are the stuff out of which people construct and evaluate selves’. Emotions are complex cognitive structures linking feeling, thinking and action (Ekman and Davidson, 1994; Averill, 1996), giving ‘shape and meaning to somatic and affective experiences’ (Shweder, 1994). One central function of emotion is social communication, where social processes underlie the causation and constitution of ongoing sequences of emotional episodes and events (Oatley, 1996). I adopt a ‘communicative approach’ to emotion where emotion can be viewed as ‘a process of making claims about personal or social identity to particular intended audiences in the context of unfolding social encounters’ (Parkinson, 1995: 169).

Emotion is a vital component in understanding the relationship between stress and illness, since emotions ‘underpin the phenomenological experience of our bodies in sickness and health’, providing the ‘basis for social reciprocity and exchange and the “link” between personal problems and broader public issues of social structure’ (Williams, 1998: 124). A. Kornhauser, an American professor (1965, cited in Travers and Cooper, 1996, preface), highlights the role of emotion in health in his work *The Mental Health of the Industrial Worker*:

Mental health is not so much a freedom from specific frustrations as it is an overall balanced relationship to the world, which permits a person to maintain a realistic, positive belief in (him)self and (his) purposeful activities. Insofar as (his) entire job and life situation facilitate and support such feelings of adequacy, inner security and meaningfulness of (his) existence, it can be presumed that (his) mental health will be good. What is important in a negative way is not any single characteristic of (his) situation but everything that deprives the person of purpose and zest, that leaves (him) with negative feelings about himself, with anxieties, tensions, a sense of lostness, emptiness, and futility.

When evaluating subjective wellbeing, the ratio of pleasant to unpleasant emotions plays a pivotal role (Deiner and Larson, 1993: 412). The scale, frequency and intensity of emotional difficulties, and the resources and skills available to meet and deal with them, are key factors in changes in health status (Marmot et al, 1991). As Brown and Harris (1989: 133) argue, ‘the fact that socio-economic factors now primarily affect health through psychosocial rather than material pathways, places emotions centre-stage in the social patterning of disease and disorder in advanced Western societies’.

Illness narratives provide insight into emotion as the missing sociological link between the micro effect of macro issues and the macro effect of micro issues (Freund, 1990; Hyden 1997). Emotion thus lies 'at the heart of the aetiological process' (Williams, 1998: 126), playing a 'central role in the human experience and cultural scripts of health, sickness, disability and death' (Williams and Bendelow, 1996: 47).

This study focuses on achieving a better understanding of the relationship between emotion and stress-related illness, and of individual and collective interventions, promoting and inhibiting the creation of healthy workplaces. \

Overview of Chapters

I begin in chapter one by reviewing more of the literature on teacher stress and teacher emotion, considering individual and organisational issues and schools as emotional arenas.

In chapter two, I reflect on researching sensitive issues. I examine theoretical approaches, research methods and the experience of fieldwork.

In chapter three, I consider teachers' perceptions of the downward phase of illness trajectories. I argue that emotional destabilisation was primarily due to feelings of loss – of physical, cognitive and emotional agility, of positive emotional experiences, and of key emotional competencies. As negative emotion accumulated, ontological security was threatened, its loss resulting in emotional breakdown.

I argue in chapter four, that educational reform has created negative emotional climates, which help produce stressed schools. This increases levels of stress for teachers and for students, many of whom already have high levels of stress from their home lives. Such climates promote low levels of individual and collective emotional competencies, and cause damage to social transactions within school communities. These create a vicious cycle of abuse feeding the downward spiral of emotional distress within the institution.

I concentrate on stress within the home in chapter 5. I argue that for these teachers and their families, the home was not a refuge from tensions within the workplace, but rather compounded the problem, stress cascading across interconnecting spheres. I look at key life events influencing stress levels in the family, spillover issues, and the impact of stress and burnout on family relationships and family health.

In chapter six I focus on trajectory management. Here I examine teachers' perceptions of factors impeding early detection and therapeutic action, where individual and school strategies were key influences on the downward phase of the illness trajectory. I argue that coping strategies were contingent on perceived levels of control in the workplace and levels of support provision where low levels of emotional competencies and individualised stress discourses reduced individual and collective awareness. Without recourse to collective coping strategies, teachers managed their distress through developing emotion-focused coping strategies, through individual stress management options and palliative measures, which disguised their problems and exacerbated symptoms, leading to emotional estrangement. Further, I suggest that according to these teachers, some schools failed in their duty of care to protect their employees from harm, in some cases actively precipitating emotional breakdown.

Chapter seven explores the self-renewal journey. I examine factors aiding and inhibiting recovery and self-renewal processes. I argue that, as with processes within the downward spiral, recovery and self-renewal are social processes, where family, friends, medical personnel, counsellors, and colleagues are essential sources of support, providing structures that enable individuals to rebuild emotional capital and recover ontological security.

In chapter eight I review the results of this research in the light of the literature reviewed earlier. I argue that teacher stress is a social phenomenon with its roots in the interactions between micro, meso and macro forces. Furthermore, I argue that teacher stress is an emotional issue. Emotion is manufactured and negotiated within ongoing social transactions. The ontological security of teachers is threatened by managerial discourse and practice, which hinders the development of individual and collective emotional literacy, creating an emotional climate that reproduces a cycle of stress for both teachers and students. I seek a more balanced context for the study of the processes underlying teacher stress, encompassing both sociological and psychological perspectives. Finally, I give suggestions for further research, and look at the implications for educational policy at individual, school and societal levels.

CHAPTER 1. STRESS AND EMOTION: INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL APPROACHES

In this chapter, I examine and critique some major research findings concerning teacher stress and teacher emotion. I consider research findings regarding emotion within organisational arenas. Much time and effort has been spent researching stress with little apparent benefit to teachers. Despite being a well documented matter of international concern (Byrne, 1995) - in Britain (Kyriacou, 1987; HSE, 1990; Woods, 1995a); Germany, Scandinavia and Russia (Rudow, 1995); the United States of America (Farber, 1991); Israel (Friedman, 1991); Canada (Leithwood et al, 1995); Australia (Dinham, 1993); and Hong Kong (Chan and Hui, 1995), stress and stress-related illness continue to escalate (Troman and Woods, 2001), with 'serious implications for work performance, health and psychological status' (Pithers, 1995: 387). Seeking out some of the major research omissions, I argue that, due to an emphasis on teacher-based causes and solutions, the underlying structural factors are poorly understood, and inadequately dealt with, and that a consideration of social processes surrounding individual and collective emotion is fundamental to understanding teacher stress.

I consider literature relating to sources and solutions regarding teacher stress, then move on to examine teacher emotion, emotional labour, emotional literacy and emotional climates.

Teacher Stress: An Individual Issue

Sources

While stress is acknowledged as a 'multi-dimensional and multi-levelled phenomenon', involving micro (personal), meso (organisational) and macro (structural) factors (Woods, 1996a: 1), much research on stress has treated these three elements as discrete entities (Kelchtermans, 1995a) rather than as inter-related phenomena. Much stress research, espousing the 'orthodox categorisation of the person as a psychological entity distinct from the social milieu, though influenced by it' (Handy, 1990: 5), fostered a false separation of the individual and the social context. This encouraged the adoption of a discourse of individual responsibility, where people are deemed vulnerable to stress due to unique personal profiles (Newton et al, 1995).

At the micro level, internationally, researchers of teacher stress and burnout have investigated relationships between stress and individual characteristics, both as sources of stress and as mediators of coping, such as locus of control (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe; 1979), sex differences (Burke and Greenglass, 1989), hardiness (Pierce and Molloy, 1990), self-esteem (Farber, 1991), cognitive appraisal processes (Borg and Riding, 1993), gender (Fontana and Abouserie, 1993), gender role (Greenglass, Burke, and Ondrack, 1990), personality (Boyle et al, 1995), behavioural styles (Travers and Cooper, 1996), commitment and values (Woods et al, 1997).

Handy (1995) argues that many psychological models, purportedly adopting a more interactional stance encompassing meso and micro perspectives, nonetheless continue to have an individual basis. In deconstructing Cooper's (1986) transactional model,

applied to teachers in Travers and Cooper (1996: 37), and Firth-Cozens' (1992) psychoanalytical framework, she argues that, in placing the individual at the centre, they emphasise the differences between people at the expense of their commonalities. While Handy agrees that stress is 'undeniably a subjective psychological experience' (1995: 87), she shows how one effect of such discourses is the depoliticisation of work stress, since such accounts fail to recognise how shared perceptions and actions, produced through collective working experiences, may lead to collective adaptational processes (Stapley, 1996).

Bullying is one issue where individualised discourses illustrate depoliticisation. Bullying is a key source of teacher stress (NASUWT, 1996; ATL, 1997). From an individual perspective, behaviour such as bullying can be viewed as caused by personal inadequacies, the serial bully characterised as a 'compulsive liar', with a 'Jekyll and Hyde personality', typically suffering from Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD) (Field, 1998). However, bullying can also signal an abusive workplace. Wyatt and Hare (1997: x) argue that work stress is 'a euphemism for work abuse, which most organizations fail to take responsibility for, and which is a major underlying cause of mental illness and physical injuries'. They view work abuse as 'the flagrant mistreatment or silent neglect of people in work organisations that remain authoritarian and over-control employees' (ibid: ix), believing the concept 'work stress' keeps employees from 'recognizing the dysfunctional work system as the cause of their anguish and makes them feel at fault for "letting things get to me"' (ibid: 3). An emphasis on individual facets of bullying thus fails to consider how such behaviours can be a response to structural forces (Troman and Woods, 2001), and/or a symptom of organisational dysfunction (Crawford, (1998).

Solutions

Despite little consistency in findings regarding personal dimensions (Byrne, 1995; Travers and Cooper, 1996), an exploration of the literature on stress management within teaching reveals much advice reinforcing the belief in teacher stress as an individual phenomenon, where solutions tend to be found at the micro level, for example Gray and Freeman (1987), Brown and Ralph (1994) and Webster (1994). However, a focus solely on teacher-centred causes and solutions fails to address collective influences on individual and organisational health and performance, the inter-relationships between micro-meso-macro factors, or the reasons why individuals and groups adopt particular coping strategies and behaviours (Cox et al, 1989).

Individual approaches, where people take responsibility for their own emotions and change their own responses to the environment (Smith, 1998), may be preventative, alleviating stress as it is perceived, or combative, dealing with active stressors (Hardy, Carson and Thomas, 1998). Techniques may include skills training, remedial counselling, cognitive-behavioural therapeutic procedures such as stress inoculation training where people are taught specific coping techniques which lessen the impact of subsequent exposure (Bartlett, 1998), positive reappraisal involving the use of cognitive strategies which reframe situations in a more positive light (Folkman, 1997) or meditation, relaxation, changes in lifestyle management and support systems (Hardy et al, 1998). Much literature on coping with stress shows socio-cultural prejudice (Folkman, 1997; Averill, 1996), defining how a healthy individual should think and feel, taking a moral stance about specific strategies, and evaluating individual coping processes as 'good' or 'bad', defining much emotion-focused coping such as denial and distancing as 'immature' (Bowman and Stern, 1995). An exploration of transcultural

psychiatry (Fernando, 1991) and of the differing meanings and cultural value of loss in Western and Buddhist cultures (Jacobson, 1989) demonstrates that passivity, for example, often leading to a diagnosis of depression, far from being a 'primitive' coping strategy (Lazarus, 1974), may be a logical response within particular cultural moral systems.

Studies such as Seidman and Zager (1991), investigating the relationship between teacher burnout and the adoption of 'maladaptive' coping mechanisms, such as avoidance coping, tend to be interpreted causally rather than correlationally, and as a demonstration of ineffective individual coping. However, as Lazarus (1990) points out, individuals may become 'stress-resistant, effective copers' only with access to adequate resources such as favourable physical and social environments, education, knowledge, and social skills. Bowman and Stern (1995) suggest the individual's choices of coping strategies are strongly related to negative affect within the workplace, and to stressor controllability. While personal coping strategies may be effective in mitigating some pressures, individuals may have little control over sources of, and solutions to, stress at institutional levels (Crawford, 1997). Indeed, research from psychoanalytical perspectives, suggests that organisations, in times of uncertainty and change, may express their chaotic nature through the individual and interpersonal disorder of its members (Stokes, 1994). As Obholzer and Roberts (1994) maintain, the 'troublesome individual' is often bound to a 'troubled institution'.

Teacher Stress: An Organisational Issue

Sources

In the last two decades, there has been a growing interest in teacher stress as an occupational issue (Smylie, 1995). The London Hazards Centre (1996) sees occupational stress as arising 'when workers perceive that they cannot adequately cope with the demands made on them or with threats to their jobs and the circumstances in which they are carried out'. Cox (1993) proposes that, when 40 per cent of workers in any organisation or group face stress related problems, then the organisation or group is unhealthy. Stress then, can be viewed as 'as sign of a sick workplace' (NWN, 1999).

International research in primary and secondary schools suggests a wide variety of occupational variables is implicated in teacher stress/burnout (Travers and Copper, 1996) ranging from powerful interpersonal demands of the job (Pithers, 1995; TBF, 2000), working conditions (Kyriacou, 1987), role stress (Pierce and Molloy, 1990), to school leadership (Leithwood et al, 1995), and the long-hours culture (Bunting, 1999).

Major societal change and radical, swift changes in governmental policies have created new demands of educational institutions and teaching staff in response to global pressures (Hargreaves, 1994). A large body of international research links the growing incidence of teacher stress with the consequences of educational reform (Farber, 1991; Dinham and Scott, 1996; Troman and Woods, 2001). A raft of legislation, beginning with the 1988 Education Reform Act, mandating Local Management of Schools, inspections, assessments and testing, and league tables, with, following the Act, multiple amendments to the National Curriculum every few years, has propelled

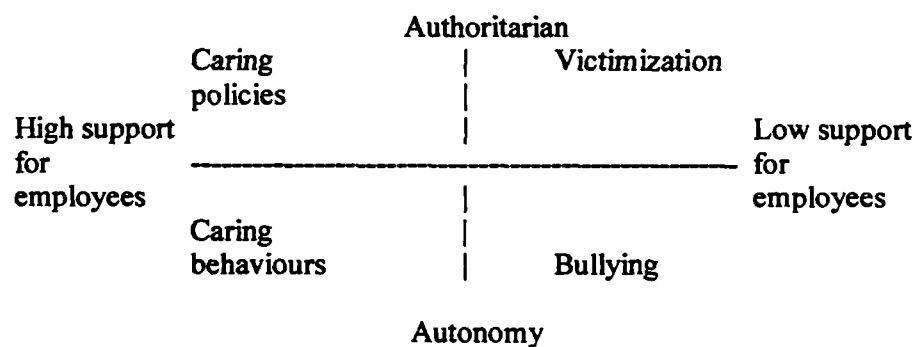
schools through a period of continuous, governmentally imposed change (Brown and Ralph, 1998). Government policies have redefined and restructured teaching (Woods et al, 1997), with the introduction of postfordist work forms and managerialist discourses (Woods, 1995a), and the rise of accountability systems (Jeffrey and Woods, 1998). Professional models of the 'good teacher' and 'good teaching' have become areas of contestation (Troman, 1996; Kelchtermans, 1996). Teachers' work has intensified (Apple, 1986; Hargreaves, 1994). Research by the TBF (2000) suggests that 93,000 teachers experience severe workplace stress resulting from excessive workloads. There are reports of increasing conflict with managers and colleagues indicating problems with the health of both school and teaching environments (ibid). According to Bell (1995), policy makers gave little thought to the 'human factor', to the effects of macro changes on teachers, and on schools. Brown and Ralph (1998) suggest a turbulent environment ripe for stress and burnout was created by change overload, the ways changes were introduced and managed, the speed of implementation with little time for reflection, and the weight of responsibility on teachers.

Solutions

Despite calls for those involved in stress management within schools to consider individual *and* institutional levels (Crawford, 1997), teacher stress still tends to be seen as mainly due to the impact of personal and situational factors on the individual, rather than as a response to wider structural forces (Troman and Woods, 2001).

Byrne (1995: 4) suggests that teacher burnout is a 'function of the quality of life in the institution'. The quality of life refers to 'the satisfaction of the legitimate needs and wants of the members of any given system' (Egan, 1985: 235), components including

interpersonal relations and social life, physical and psychological dimensions such as safety, security and comfort, organisational clarity, reasonable autonomy and the opportunity to influence others, access to resources to be an effective system member, achievement and recognition, challenge, and opportunities to learn (ibid: 237-238). The quality of life is reported as diminishing in some schools (Hargreaves, 1994). Evidence suggests that school cultures are one influence contributing to individual vulnerability to burnout (Friedman, 1991; Kelchtermans, 1995a; Troman and Woods, 2001). Tehrani (1996) points out how facets of particular organisational cultures encourage supportive or abusive environments.



Organisational Culture and Harassment (Tehrani, 1996: 104)

Tehrani believes that it is through the development and promotion of caring organizational values and behaviours that cultural environments support or prevent the occurrence of victimisation, harassment and bullying.

Some stress management advocates the use of both individual and organisational strategies to combat workplace stress (Kagan, Kagan and Watson, 1995; James, Jarrett and Lucas, 1996; Quick et al, 1997). Research in many professional arenas demonstrates the need for a greater consideration of organisational issues in the

prevention of stress (James, 1997; Carson and Kuipers, 1998). Earnshaw and Cooper (1996: 98-99) advise a preventative approach combining:

- Primary intervention '*preventive* action to reduce or eliminate stressors (i.e. sources of stress) and with positively promoting a supportive and healthy work environment';
- Secondary intervention 'concerned with the *prompt detection and management* of depression and anxiety by increasing self-awareness and improving stress management skills';
- Tertiary intervention 'concerned with the *rehabilitation and recovery process* of those individuals who have suffered or are suffering from ill-health as a result of stress'.

Hopkins (1997) advocates a systems approach, where attention is paid to individual susceptibility, prevalent role stressors and role supports, structural and processual organisational problems, and the turbulence between micro, meso and macro forces. Here, optimal performance is enhanced through the creation of enabling cultures and improving the affective health of employees. Such approaches are rare in schools. There is little evidence of school-wide workplace interventions, such as the Well-Being Project in Norfolk (TBF, 2000), which encourages schools to examine internal structures and relationships.

Blase (1991) argues that political aspects of school environments are crucial to understanding stress. He agrees with Ball (1987) and Sparkes (1990), that much political activity in schools is accompanied by significant stress, and that teachers

increasingly associate strong, intensely negative feelings with school-based micro-politics. A micro-political perspective considers

power and how people use it to influence others and to protect themselves. It is about conflict and how people compete with each other to get what they want. It is about cooperation and how people build support among themselves to achieve their ends. It is about what people in all social settings think about and have strong feelings about, but what is so often unspoken and not easily observed. (Blase, 1991: 1-2)

Emotion thus makes an important contribution to the micro-political life of schools, to the why and how of engagement in political actions.

Although the links between stress and emotion are well documented, a consideration of these associations is missing from many conceptual accounts of stress (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994). Many models of teacher stress have been criticised for not paying enough attention to affective components (Boyle et al, 1995). Hargreaves (1998a) claims that many involved in educational reform, and in writing about educational change, underplay the emotional dimension. Kyriacou (1987: 146) defines teacher stress as 'the experience by a teacher of unpleasant emotions, such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger and depression, resulting from aspects of his work as a teacher', and burnout as the result of 'prolonged teacher stress, primarily characterised by physical, emotional and attitudinal exhaustion'. Despite this emphasis on emotional components, much research on teacher stress and burnout tells us very little about stress emotions and illness processes, how teachers experience stress and burnout socially, politically and phenomenologically, and how micro-political factors impinge on the

stress process. As Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) point out, understanding change processes requires deeper analysis, plus the commitment to translate ideas and understandings into action, where greater attention needs to be paid in particular to the emotions of educational change.

I will now turn to the literature on teacher emotion.

Teacher Emotion

Hargreaves (1998a: 835) maintains that emotions 'lie at the heart of teaching'. While much research on teachers' lives shows the emotional nature of teachers' work (Measor, 1985; Nias, 1989; Jeffrey and Woods, 1996a), there has been relatively little research conducted specifically on the impact and significance of affective dimensions of teachers' lives (Nias, 1996). An emphasis on teacher thinking has neglected teacher feeling (Hargreaves and Tucker, 1991). However, as Golby (1996: 433) avers, 'Gut reactions have to be understood as originating in the head'. The accent on rationality, predominantly derived from psychological perspectives, led to an individualised discourse on teacher emotion, a discourse of positive emotion, and a lack of understanding of how the emotional landscapes of teaching are formed through social transactions, shaped not only by individuals, but also by sociological, political and institutional forces (Blackmore, 1996). In particular, until recently, there has been little sociological analysis into the emotions of teaching. Richardson (1995: 67), in exploring how educational change processes deeply affect emotional relationships constituting the heart of teaching and learning, emphasises the relational aspect of stress, the constantly feeling undervalued, feeling responsible for the ills of society, feeling contempt and disrespect from students, feeling the government's lack of faith in the

profession, feeling media scorn, where 'stress is caused by feeling bad about oneself and constantly being made aware of one's inadequacy even though one is actually quite good at the job'. As Nias (1996: 305) contends, emotion therefore is not simply '*in teaching*', but is a response to working conditions, and the increasing need to defend the self. Hargreaves (1998b: 315) agrees, seeing the emotional lives of teachers not just as 'matters of personal disposition or commitment, as psychological qualities that emerge among individuals' but as 'social and political phenomena ... shaped by how the work of teaching is organized, structured and led'.

Teaching is also an 'emotional practice' (Hargreaves, 1998a), 'highly charged with feeling, aroused by and directed towards not just people but also values and ideals' (Nias, 1996: 293). Emotional bonds fill teachers' relationships with students, parents and colleagues, binding teaching strategies and conceptual thinking (Jeffrey and Woods, 1996a). Teachers have a deep emotional relationship to their work due not only to this relational orientation, but also to the high investment of the self in their work and the heavy investment in time, goals, moral purposes, commitments and attachments that they make within their working lives (Nias, 1996). Hargreaves (1998a: 835) contends that 'good teachers' are 'emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy', and where 'good teaching' is 'charged with positive emotion'. Many teachers speak of feeling 'love' for their students (Nias, 1989; Hargreaves, 1998a). Much collected data has been interpreted through theoretical concepts such as commitment, pride, creativity, and satisfaction. On the other hand, teachers also feel 'fear, anguish, anger, despair, depression, humiliation, grief and guilt' (Jeffrey and Woods, 1996a). Hargreaves (1999) points out that negative emotion is always near the surface. Hargreaves and Tucker (1991) observe that guilt, in particular, with associated feelings

of frustration and anxiety, is a central preoccupation of teachers, which demotivates and disables. They distinguish between

- a) guilt traps, 'social and motivational patterns which delineate and determine teacher guilt; patterns which impel and imprison many teachers within emotional states which can be both personally unrewarding and professionally unproductive' (p.495), and
- b) guilt trips, 'the different strategies that teachers adopt to deal with, deny or repair this guilt' (p.495), which may result in denial, cynicism, exit and burnout. Guilt not only creates behaviours often deemed irrational, uncaring or unproductive but is the precursor of, and generator of, further undesirable behaviours when the strategies adopted result in further maladaptive behaviours.

They identify two main types of guilt:

- i) Persecutory guilt, arising 'from doing something which is forbidden or from failing to do something which is expected, by one or more external authorities' (p.495).
- ii) Depressive guilt, said to develop from early childhood relationships with the mother, arising when 'individuals feel they have ignored, betrayed or failed to protect the people or values that symbolize their good internal object' (p.495).

Hargreaves and Tucker argue that guilt is not a personal choice but a public issue, socially generated and mediated, emotionally located and practically consequential.

Further, guilt traps, created by the commitment to care, the open-endedness of teaching, accountability, intensification, work ethics, and the persona of perfectionism, are socially located within the intersection of various paths in teachers' work creating 'powerful and perplexing combinations of depressive and persecutory guilt in the working lives of many teachers, that pose serious problems for their effectiveness and integrity' (p.496).

Supporting Fineman et al (1993), regarding the lack of attention paid to negative emotion within organisational research, Hargreaves (1999) highlights how much literature on teacher feeling and emotion still focuses on the more easily managed and apparently safer emotions, such as satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Dinham and Scott, 1996), rather than on the more unsettling, volatile, unpredictable emotions such as joy, excitement, frustration, anxiety, sadness, jealousy, envy, fear, guilt, shame and anger. These emotions often signal the presence of stress (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994; Oatley, 1996). There are reports that such negative emotion is increasingly evident in teachers' working lives, a survey of teachers' attitudes revealing 'a tired, angry profession with an agenda for change' (Sutcliffe, 1997). One of the main changes noticed in recent years has been a shift in teachers' emotionality, the process of 'being emotional', which 'locates the person in the world of social interaction' (Denzin, 1984: 137). Nias (1996: 300), in her editorial introduction to the *Cambridge Journal of Education's* special edition devoted to teacher emotion, reports that while students were formerly reported as occupying the central emotional role, currently, the 'most intensive, hostile and deeply disturbing emotions' come from encounters with other adults, and from 'intrusions on professional territory' from school policy such as maintaining records and disciplinary interventions.

While teacher emotion is experienced individually, it arises through ongoing transactions within social relationships (Parkinson, 1996). Psychological and sociological research into stress and emotion within industrial and business contexts demonstrates the importance of considering organisations as emotional arenas (Litwin et al, 1978; Fassel, 1992; Newton et al, 1995; Stapley, 1996). Halton (1995: 187-189) suggests that structural changes within current educational institutions have been disabling, resulting in 'cultures of conflict' and 'atmospheres of hostility and mistrust', with 'lives turned upside down', and staff filled with 'anger, fear and despair'. While much is known about which emotions teachers feel, little is known of the relational and organisational processes surrounding these emotions.

Schools as Emotional Arenas

Emotion is an important factor contributing to, and reflecting organisational cultures and structures, where 'feelings shape and lubricate social transactions', and where 'order and control, the very essence of the "organisation" of work, concern what people "do" with their feelings' (Fineman, 1993: 9, Note1). The main organisational emotional factors shown as contributing to stress in the workplace include emotional labour and emotion work, emotional literacy and emotional climate. I will deal with each in turn.

Emotional labour

Teaching is hard emotional labour, often pleasurable, but always taxing, even in the best of times. (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998: 60)

Research from many occupational arenas suggests that reduced levels of autonomy in emotional labouring processes contribute to a decline in emotional well-being, and so to the experience of stress (Bulan et al, 1997). As Hargreaves (1998a: 840) points out, emotional labour exposes teachers' vulnerability, 'when the conditions of and demands on their work make it hard for them to do their "emotion work" properly'.

In Hochschild's seminal work (1983: 7), emotional labour 'requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others ... This kind of labour calls for a coordination of mind and feelings, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honour as deep and integral to our personality'. Hochschild (1979) suggests that the performance of prescribed emotional labour norms within the workplace is an alienating force, estranging individuals from their own emotional selves. Critiques of Hochschild's emphasis on negative effects of emotional labour (Wharton, 1993; Tolich, 1993) have revealed substantial levels of emotional reward through liberating autonomous emotional displays, more evident when working conditions are conducive to a degree of autonomy, where emotion is self-regulated.

Within differing paradigms, there has been some confusion regarding emotional labour and emotion work, which have been used interchangeably. Within the sociology of health and illness literature, emotion work is most often considered in its nurturing sense, as comforting and protective. Lee Trewick (1996: 115), in her study of care assistants' work, suggests that emotion work is 'a dynamic mechanism for creating social order', which can also be an empowering technique, playing an important strategic role in defining, organising and reacting to residents' behaviour.

Teaching is one occupation among many, where the human service aspects mean it involves much emotional labour and emotion work. The term 'emotional labour', within some recent work in educational research, has tended to encompass the concept of emotion work within its remit, as teachers both actively manage their own emotional state, and that of others within their schools and the wider community (Hargreaves, 1998a). In this research I maintain a distinction between the terms emotional labour, concerning work done on the self by the self in response to external and internal demands (Hochschild, 1983), and emotion work, concerning efforts done both by others on the self, and by the self on others (Lee Trewick, 1996).

Teachers deal daily with emotional encounters, defining, organising and reacting to emotion in their classrooms. They play key roles in creating social order within their environment, as well as enabling children to further their understandings of emotion, emotional expression and emotional regulation, to develop both emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies, and to develop personal and social emotional competencies (Salovey and Sluyter, 1997; Sachs and Blackmore, 1998). Several examples of teachers managing both their own emotions and the emotions of others, and of teachers feeling emotionally managed by others, can be found in much of the writing on teacher stress and teacher emotion (*The Cambridge Journal of Education*, 1996; Jeffrey and Woods, 1996b; Troman and Woods, 2001). However, little empirical research has been conducted on the relationship between emotional labouring processes, emotion work and stress-related illness within secondary teaching.

Emotional literacy

An emotionally literate pupil (or teacher) is better able to cope with the vicissitudes of school life, and therefore to be less disruptive and more receptive to learning. (Reed, 1997)

Emotional literacy became one of the 'buzz' phrases of the late 20th century. According to Goleman (1995: xi), the Western world is in the throes of a 'collective emotional crisis', where low levels of emotional literacy threaten prosperity. Recently, much interest has been shown in the development of emotional competencies. Following on from Gardner's (1983) work on multiple intelligences, theorists have used concepts such as emotional intelligence, emotional competence and emotional literacy to further understandings of emotional dimensions contributing to human development and achievement (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

Emotional intelligence involves:

The ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. (Salovey and Sluyter, 1997: 10)

Key factors in emotional intelligence include awareness, emotion management, communication, personal decision-making, empathy and handling relationships (Klein, 1997: 5). Many educational psychologists prefer to speak of competencies rather than

intelligences, where emotional competence, as a dynamic process, focuses on the attainment of knowledge and the acquisition of certain levels of skill (Salovey and Sluyter, 1997). Much work within industry demonstrates the importance of emotional skills in the workplace (Spencer and Spencer, 1993), emotional intelligence said to be a quality that marks out the best managers in the post-modern world (Coles, 1997a). Goleman (1998), in 'Working with Emotional Intelligence', drawing on McClelland's (1973) work on achievement, and Damasio's (1994) evidence regarding the interdependence of cognition and affect, provides evidence demonstrating his view that emotional competencies, learned within social relationships, are twice as important as cognitive abilities in the workplace. Through work with individual 'stars', or high achievers, within the business world, Goleman (1998) developed the 'Emotional Competence Framework' (see appendix 2), which he claims provides a management tool essential for survival in the post-modern world, where 'as work changes, these human capacities can help us not just compete, but also to nurture the capacity for pleasure, even joy in our work' (ibid, p.316). Goleman's framework, based primarily on research from a particular population, might be criticised as displaying many of the value judgements inherent in much western individualistic frameworks. I feel it pays too little attention to contestation between concepts, between power and status, conflict and consensus, structure and agency. It holds many contradictory assumptions regarding micro-meso-macro links, and is less successful when dealing with 'the emotionally intelligent organisation' (ibid, p.281-311) where he places little emphasis on supportive functions. However, it is clear that Goleman's conceptual structure provides important tools that might be usefully applied in many fields.

Recently, educationalists have shown increasing interest in the concept of emotional literacy as the foundation of teaching and learning (Crace, 1998), Sir Christopher Ball's

Start Right report (1994) highlighting the importance of emotional well-being and 'super skills', such as motivation and confidence, in the development of pre-school children and juniors (Pascal and Bertram, 1997). Organisations such as Antidote, Circle Works, and Remembering Education, promote the concept of emotional literacy through their writings, conferences, and individual and school programmes. Annandale primary school, Greenwich, with the help of government funding, is one of the first schools to implement a pioneering emotional literacy policy (Klein, 2000). Headteacher David Edwards, influenced by Goleman's work, is creating an environment fostering emotional and social development in both teachers and children through active pupil involvement in programmes dealing with emotional education, conflict resolution, anger management, peer mentoring and peer counselling (ibid).

Research from industrial settings suggests that high levels of emotional resilience, evident in individuals and organisations with well-developed emotional literacy, seem protective against burnout (Coles, 1997b). There has been little study of emotional literacy, of the links between personal and collective emotional competencies, within teaching, or of how these might link with the processes underlying teacher stress.

Emotional climate

The emotional climate of school can mark us for a lifetime. (S. Orbach, in Dean, 1997)

All organisations have particular emotional climates - 'group phenomenon sets of emotions or feelings which are not only shared by groups of individuals implicated in common social structures and processes, but which are also significant in the formation

and maintenance of political and social identities and collective behaviour' (Barbalet, 1998: 159). These phenomena set the emotional tone of an organisation, inspiring either high levels of emotional competencies, providing a source of confidence, trust, commitment and mutual respect, or low levels of emotional competencies, resulting in fear, anxiety, frustration, anger, a loss of self respect and social respect (Smith, 1992).

Educational research suggests there have been recent changes in school emotional climates (Ball, 1987; Hargreaves, 1994). 'Emotional cultures' of suspicion and fear, trust and safety, compliance and collegiality, largely prescribed by the leadership, were reported in Beatty's (1999) interviews with 53 primary and secondary Canadian teachers. Troman and Woods (2001) observed the erosion in trust relations, and the emergence of cultures of blame, within some primary schools they studied. Sachs and Blackmore (1998), in a study of eight primary and nine secondary female principals or deputies in Australia, argue that the emotional responses of those in school leadership positions, are shaped by feeling rules, 'socially shared guidelines, governing the extent, type, and intensity of feeling' (Bulan et al, 1997: 237). Implicit within the organisational ethos of both educational system and school, these rules prescribe emotional expression, and inform both the degree of acceptable emotional labour, and who performs this labour (Sachs and Blackmore, 1998).

Levels of positive and negative affect contributing to organisational health are difficult to measure (Hart et al, 2000). Research suggests that individuals and organisations may have little awareness in particular of the emotional aspects of their own organisational culture (Stapley, 1996), for example, the overt and covert display rules dictating acceptable and unacceptable emotional expression. The links between individual emotional development and group emotion are well documented (Fineman, 1993). The

teaching world is one area where personal, and/or group emotion, provides insight into emotional modes of being, linking the 'existential, phenomenologically embodied agent with wider structures of power and domination, civilisation and control in society' (Williams, 1998: 131). However, there has been little exploration of collective emotional phenomena within secondary schools, nor on whether and how changes in emotional climates might influence the growing incidence of stress and burnout.

The literature on emotional dimensions has been slow in influencing educational research and the teaching profession. While managing the emotions of rapid ongoing change is implicit within post-modern organisations (Blackmore, 1996), as Sachs and Blackmore (1998) point out, much of the literature on school reform and restructuring focuses on organisational change and intensification, ignoring emotional factors. Little work has been done on the emotional costs, in particular, on individual teachers, and their families. Much work has concentrated on primary schools, with mostly female teachers, less research conducted into the emotionality of male teachers, or the emotional micro-politics underpinning stress-related illness among secondary school teachers. An understanding of teacher emotionality is central to understanding macro-meso-micro links. Handy (1995: 89) advocates a 'rethinking' of the 'subjectivity of distress'. Much current research, as Bartlett (1998: 83) argues, 'does not do justice to the intricate processual nature' of stress. There is a need to 'embrace both its enormous complexity and its microscopic subtlety at the individual experiential level of analysis' (ibid). The Marbach conference on Teacher Burnout (1995) identified the need for more longitudinal research to promote greater understanding of the processes underlying burnout. There is little empirical evidence concerning the relationship between individual subjective experience and emotion within the secondary teacher's social environment.

In this research, my aim was to investigate emotional processes influencing stress-related illness among secondary school teachers. Some of the questions, which emerge unanswered from a consideration of the literature on teacher stress and teacher emotion, and which I hoped to answer, include:

How do secondary teachers perceive the processual nature of stress-related illness?

What are teachers' perceptions of the role of micro, meso, and macro factors on their illness career?

How do teachers feel about their work and how is teachers' work stress-producing?

What is the relationship between individual subjective experience and emotion in a) school and b) home environments? For example, how do schools as emotional arenas influence stress-related illness, and vice versa, and how does teacher stress influence family lives?

How do teachers perceive the strategies and interventions adopted by individuals, colleagues, families, friends, and medical professionals as influencing the illness trajectory?

What factors promote and inhibit self-renewal processes?

Answering these questions involved exploring firstly, the illness career, secondly, social transactions within the workplace, thirdly, the links between teacher stress and schools as emotional arenas, and fourthly, stress within family lives. In order to explore these sensitive research questions, I needed to engage on an emotional level with teachers. In the next chapter, I consider theoretical frameworks on emotion, the use of life history methods, the very nature of the research questions indicating a qualitative approach (Henslin, 1990), and focus on some of the methodological issues surrounding researching a sensitive issue.

CHAPTER 2. RESEARCHING A SENSITIVE ISSUE

Many research topics are 'sensitive', provoking 'the disclosure of highly personal and confidential information' (Brannen, 1988: 552). According to Lee (1993: 4), sensitive research 'potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it', and may present problems 'because research into them involves potential costs to those involved in the research, including, on occasion, the researcher'. The nature of the research task thus involves planning and carrying out ethically responsible research (Sieber, 1992), minimizing research risks to interviewees and interviewer, while pursuing the goal of uncovering sensitive information through exploring highly emotional charged arenas.

In this chapter, I explore theoretical frameworks, methodological issues, and research processes. Additional material alluding to the sensitive nature of this study, ethical issues, interviewer voice repertoires, protective measures taken to safeguard the health of interviewee and interviewer, informed consent, the emotional labour of interviewing vulnerable populations, gender and power relations, leaving the field and therapeutic outcomes, and implications for researcher support can be found in Appendix 1.

Theoretical Frameworks

This thesis examines teacher emotion, how teachers make sense of health and illness, how they legitimate their position within the construction of the interview, and how they perceive the relationship between their bodies and society. Woods (1995: 1) argues that since stress is a 'multidimensional and multi-levelled phenomenon', it requires 'a number

of theories of different kinds for full comprehension, rather than one all-embracing theory or model'.

There is much debate surrounding theoretical frameworks on emotion, emotions lying at the juncture of a number of classical debates in sociology, including micro/macro, quantitative/qualitative, and biosocial versus social constructivist perspectives (Williams and Bendelow, 1996: 28). On the one hand, 'universalist' perspectives emphasise the biological nature of emotions (LeDoux, 1986; Ekman, 1994), while, on the other hand, relativists argue sociocultural factors constitute or construct emotion, emotion experienced and expressed through a socio-cultural lens (Harré, 1986; Armon-Jones, 1986). Both sides of this dichotomy have been criticised for their tendency to overstretch their frame of reference, explanations concentrating on the physiological tending to ignore the social and cultural context, and vice versa (Scheff, 1983; Williams, 1998). Others see emotion more in interactional terms, involving biological, social and cultural dimensions, where interdisciplinary work is essential in building bridges between neurobiology, psychology, and sociology (Leventhal and Patrick-Miller, 1993; Scherer, 1993; Oatley, 1996).

I consider emotion using three theoretical frameworks, the psychology of emotion, the sociology of emotion, and the sociology of health and disease. These inform both my choice of methods and much of the research process.

The psychology of emotion

In this study I follow the work of Parkinson (1995), Oatley (1992, 1996) and Averill (1980, 1994), who advocate a more social approach to social psychological research on

emotion, where cognition, affect and action cannot be separated from social and cultural forces.

As I have already noted, much psychology within the 20th century followed the assumption that emotion, 'private, reactive and partly uncontrollable' (Parkinson, 1995: 304), was an individual phenomenon. Emotion and cognition were viewed as separate entities, as binary polarities, cognition seen as rational, emotion as irrational, as distorting perception, and an interference to human action (Barbalet, 1998). Cognition was given primary importance, emotion a response to thought (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

Neuroscience studies into parallel processing and neural networks however, suggest an interdependence of affective and cognitive dimensions in brain structure and functioning, emotional and cognitive understandings operating in harmony, inextricably linked within interconnections between limbic systems and the cerebral cortex (Damasio, 1994). Positive and negative affect, no longer viewed as opposite poles of a common dimension, are more commonly seen as two independent dimensions (Leventhal and Patrick-Miller, 1993). Further, emotion can be viewed as associated with volition and higher levels of information processing (Averill, 1996), as 'grounding the very possibility of rationality' (Sousa, 1987: 203).

From the 1930's to the 1970's, intrapsychic accounts dominated discourses on stress and coping, cognitive appraisal being one of the most influential theoretical developments (Lazarus, 1974). Appraisal theory, where 'the interpretation of an event or situation influences both the quality and intensity of the emotion experienced and the degree of perceived threat' (Atkinson et al, 1993: A-33), became a central

component of psychological theories of stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984), which deduce that 'it is the way that a person appraises what is happening, rather than the realities themselves, that determines the stressful impact' (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994: 237).

Parkinson (1995) deconstructs intrapsychic explanations of emotion, showing that accounts of emotions as individual feelings are inadequate and best viewed as part of the broader ideological framework of individualism, historically and culturally specific. Evidence was produced primarily through creating artificial emotionally stressful situations often in laboratory situations, for example Schachter and Singer (1962). Maddi (1990), in a critique of appraisal theories, points out that the nature of processes involved is not made clear, nor are interactions between variables such as personality, events, appraisals of events, coping efforts, goals and emotional distress made specific. Pugmire (1998) criticises such studies as failing to consider emotion as a key component of evaluative processes, tending to focus on peoples' beliefs about emotions rather than how emotions worked in social situations. Furthermore, according to Parkinson (1995) appraisal theorists neglect to differentiate between primary appraisal, referring to whether situations hold relevance for personal well-being, secondary appraisal, focusing on possible ways of coping and evaluations of personal and environmental resources, and re-appraisal, subsequent revisions of initial evaluations.

Lazarus (1990), with a lifetime's work researching appraisal and cognition, has recently turned to emotion as holding the key to understanding stress. However, his work can be criticised for its tendency to consider primarily individual perspectives, often unwittingly laying blame on individuals. For example, he claims that 'the kind, duration, intensity, and pattern of occurrence and recurrence of both positive and negative emotions

provide much more insight into a person's deficits and strengths than simply the degree and content of stress' (ibid: 112). Using therapeutic language, he examines client's 'faulty appraisals' of life circumstances, their 'deficits' in the coping process, where recurrent anger tells us that 'the environment is frequently *viewed* as assaultive' or recurrent anxiety indicates that 'the environment frequently *seems* threatening' (ibid: 113, my italics). Lazarus and Lazarus, (1994: 266, my italics) suggest that individuals 'must learn to recognize what *they have been doing wrong* to have a good chance of changing their emotional lives'. There is much discussion of individual cognitive solutions assuming the client is using 'faulty' adaptors, but little attention given to a consideration of the notion that the client's perceptions may be grounded in reality (Brown, 1996).

The assumptions generated by appraisal theories shaped much social psychological research, resulting in the neglect of studies of emotion as a communicative social process, and a lack of understanding of actual emotional episodes within interpersonal and institutional worlds (Parkinson, 1996; Stapley, 1996). Greenwood (1994: 153) avers that psychology needs to reclaim the social, with more emphasis on emotion as socially constituted, within 'social forms of evaluative representation of actions and social relations', and socially constructed, created through 'arrangements, conventions, and agreements ... including those concerning the appropriate objects of such forms of evaluation'. Organisational and psychoanalytical perspectives have given insight into unconscious dimensions of some emotional transactions (Obholzer and Roberts, 1994; Stapley, 1996).

Parkinson's (1995) work demonstrates that emotions can be viewed relationally. 'Manufactured out of ongoing, usually interpersonal processes, or negotiated during the

course of an encounter', they do not spring 'ready-made into personal consciousness' (ibid: 15). Emotions are communicative, often signalling social problems (Averill, 1996). They act not only as communicators to the self, they also to others, making identity claims (Parkinson, 1995), and 'causing changes in the modes of our interactions, from co-operation, to withdrawal, to conflict, to deference' (Oatley, 1996: 312). Transmission of emotional communication, however, is not always successful. According to Oatley (1996), emotions are only communicated to the self in 2/3 of occasions, emotions such as anxiety, shame, guilt, happiness, and sadness often not well recognised by others, perhaps due to displacement, to directing emotion to the wrong person. However, this might also infer conflict with the emotion rules within an organisation (Hochschild, 1979; Stokes, 1994), or show a lack of skill in recognition (Oatley, 1996), signalling low levels of individual and/or collective emotional competencies (Goleman, 1998).

There is a need to explore the ways emotions arise during ongoing social interactions within schools, and how these relate to emotional climates, individual and collective coping strategies, interventions, and emotional competencies. Useful frameworks can be found in the sociology of emotion.

The sociology of emotion

There is a need for a more sociological understanding of stress and emotion (Hargreaves, 1994; Troman and Woods, 2001). For Lennon (1989), the sociology of emotion, along with network theory, offers the 'most promise' in understanding the sociological nature of stress. For many years the emotions were viewed as peripheral to sociological investigation. Key sociological texts such as Max Weber's *The Protestant*

Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1905) were highly influenced by Cartesian and Kantian principles concerning the separation of reason, emotion, rationality and irrationality. Talcott Parson's *The Social System* (1951), for example, promoting a cognitive rational sociology, banished emotion from the public sphere to the home sphere.

In 1959, C. Wright Mills encouraged sociologists to use the sociological imagination: 'the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self - and to see the relations between the two'. The relevance of emotion to social processes, and its importance to sociological insight was highlighted by a creative burst of interest in the 1970's and 1980's, with the publication of Collins' *Conflict Sociology* (1975), Kemper's *A Social Interactional Theory of Emotions* (1978), Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* (1983) and Denzin's *On Understanding Emotion* (1984). Social constructionists showed 'the available register of emotions, forms of emotional experiencing and expression, as well as wider meanings of emotions, vary culturally and historically' (Craib, 1995: 152).

During the 1980's, the issue of micro-macro linkage emerged as *the* central problematic within sociological theory (Ritzer, 1989). Pearlin (1989) advocated moving from a focus on particular stressful events, hassles, and strains, and concentrating on longitudinal work, observing and assessing the links between constellations of stressors, distinguishing between primary and secondary stressors (those resulting as a consequence of primary stressors, often leading to chronic negative emotional states), and questioning how individual stress is influenced by social and economic structural arrangements in which individuals are embedded. Some sociologists were anxious to combine insights from both the social constructionist view, where emotions are socially

patterned responses rather than inner responses, with views emphasising human agency. According to Collins (1990), it is the micro-foundation of emotions, which provides insight into the processes of macro-sociology.

Hochschild's (1979, 1983) interviews with cabin crew demonstrate the socially grounded nature of emotion management, providing a sociological lens for viewing the social structure of coping, the stress of emotion work, and socialisation processes involved in working environments (Lennon, 1989). Frameworks for understanding gender-specific emotion norms have been developed, combining understandings from both psychological and sociological paradigms (Chodorow, 1978; Hochschild, 1983, 1997). James (1989), for example, critiques Strauss et al's (1985) concepts of 'comfort work', 'sentimental work', 'composure work' (see chapter 3) for failing to note the gendered division of labour associated with such work. Kemper's (1978) social interactional theory of emotions is also highly influential in my work. For Kemper (1978: 32), power relations and status relations are important factors contributing to the social bases of emotion, where 'an extremely large class of human emotions results from real, anticipated, imagined or recollected outcomes of social relationships'. While the locus of emotion remains with individuals, it is the 'social matrix', the plurality of groups within which individuals hold memberships, which determines 'which emotions are likely to be experienced when and where, on what grounds and for what reasons, by what modes of expression, by whom' (Kemper, 1993: 41/42). Here, changes in the social matrix alter emotion parameters, since emotion norms, sanctions, prescriptions and proscriptions, 'reflect patterns of social relationship' (Hochschild, 1979: 566). It is important to note here that emotion norms can also be viewed as outcomes of practices, and are constantly subject to instability and revision (Bourdieu, 1990).

Like some psychologists, some sociologists have increasingly moved towards a relational understanding of emotions, where emotions are 'essentially communicative' (Burkitt, 1997: 40). Burkitt (1997) argues that studies of love and aggression demonstrate that views of emotions as expressions of inner processes do not bear close scrutiny. Rather, they have both socio-cultural and corporeal, embodied aspects, only arising within relationships and interdependencies. Further, he suggests that the social habitus provides the learning environment for the production and regulation of emotion and the manifestation of learned bodily techniques, shaped by prevalent power relations.

While there are theoretical and methodological dangers in 'assuming that the sociological aspects of emotional life' can explain 'the whole of emotional life' (Craib, 1995: 155), I support Denzin (1984) and Fineman (1993) in viewing emotionality as a basis of social organization. The sociology of emotions has much to offer the study of teacher stress, teacher emotion and stress-related illness. The sociology and psychology of health and illness also extends our understanding of macro-meso-micro links.

The sociology of health and illness

Emotion has been a neglected and under-theorised aspect within health debates. There is growing interest in 'psychosocial mechanisms' linking 'social structure to health, including the importance of relative rather than absolute deprivation and the corrosive effects of an increasingly "atomised" society' (Williams, 1998: 121). The association of negative affect with somatic symptoms and disease suggest it is 'essential to disaggregate the negative affect pole' (Leventhal and Patrick-Miller, 1993: 366).

Health is 'a state of optimum capacity for effective role performance' (Radley, 1994: 80), while illness can be viewed as 'a state that results from the interpretations of changes in bodily states and in personal capabilities' (ibid: 2). In other words, we make sense of the experience of the failing body, and of altered transactions, verbal and observational, with others, by labelling it illness. Within sociological and social psychological paradigms, the main concerns are with social and cultural aspects of health and illness, and examining how people, individually and collectively, make sense of health and illness experiences. Hyden (1997: 48) argues, 'as social scientists we can use illness narratives as a means of studying not only the world of biomedical reality, but also the illness experience and its social and cultural underpinnings'.

Much behavioural medicine and health psychology, derived from biomedical perspectives and the medical model, centres on individuals as foci of attention and intervention, emphasising for example, the predisposition to disease, personal resilience, or individual recovery trajectories (Stephoe, 1991). Social scientists have critiqued such approaches for failing to take account of the social settings in which illness and recovery occur (Radley, 1994). Freund (1990: 455) criticises purely constructionist approaches as ignoring 'biological process and present[ing] a disembodied view of human emotions The relationship between body and emotions [is] not resolved by ignoring the body's relevance or by viewing emotions simply as cognitive products'. Studying illness provides additional support for an emotion-specific approach to stress-illness relationships (Brown and Harris, 1978). Wilkinson (1996: 184) believes prolonged stress from any emotional sources is 'often all it takes to damage health'. Health and illness are thus social dimensions, where beliefs about health and illness are influenced by knowledge bases about the body, derived from the various cultural settings people inhabit. The status of 'sick role' is conditionally legitimated by others, who permit

removal of the self from obligatory duties, provided they cooperate with the advice given, for example, accessing medical intervention (Radley, 1994). Illness entails biographical disruption (Williams, 2000), creating discontinuities in ongoing lives and changes in identity (Hyden, 1997). The sociological task becomes one of showing 'how this active, expressive and experiencing body relates to historically shaped, socially organised systems of human activity' (Freund, 1990: 456).

For Williams (1998), a focus on psychosocial and processes of meaning necessarily places emotion centre-stage, 'linking the health and illness of the existential-phenomenologically embodied agent with the wider structures of power and domination, civilisation and control in society' (Williams and Bendelow, 1996: 42). Williams (1998: 128), building on Bourdieu's (1990) ideas of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital, and Collins' (1990) notion of emotional energy, developed the concept 'emotional capital', linking the body, the social habitus, individual and collective experiences of power and status, conflict and change, empowerment and disempowerment. Here, emotional capital, which may be materially, socially and culturally 'completed', as well as 'depleted' (Williams, 1998: 134), 'constitutes both a challenge and opportunity to governments concerned with the corrosive effects of "unhealthy societies" and the "afflictions of inequality"' (ibid: 133).

Francis (1997: 153) on the other hand, in exploring affect control theory within support groups for divorce or bereavement, highlights the interpersonal emotion management processes by which emotions are constructed, both by ourselves and also by others, and how cues within interpersonal relationships facilitate the interpretation of emotional signals. Not all signals from others, however, are given off intentionally (Goffman, 1959). As with other behavioural norms, others may deliberately encourage,

discourage, or mould our emotions to fit the situation (Francis, 1997). As Leventhal and Patrick-Miller (1993: 375) argue, emotions are embedded in social contexts, where interpersonal transactions play powerful roles in 'regulating emotional reactions and moderating the effects of stress on health'.

This study will contribute to theory within the psychology of emotions, the sociology of emotions, and the sociology of health and illness. A re-evaluation of the relationships between the body, the organisation and emotion is called for (Harré and Parrot, 1996). As Hargreaves and Tucker (1991: 492) point out, 'teacher feeling as well as teacher thinking is a critical connector of action, person and context'. The social aetiology of ill-health and emotional distress can only be understood through an analysis of the disjunctures and discontinuities within social institutions, social stratification, value systems and interpersonal relationships which create interdependent stressor constellations (Pearlin, 1989).

Research Methods

Exploring subjectivity

As Denzin (1984: 61) points out, 'the sociological study and definition of emotion must begin with the study of selves and others, joined and separated in episodes of copresent interaction. Defining emotion as self-feeling returns the sociology of emotion to the world of lived, interactional experience'. Recent theoretical developments have concentrated more on subjectivity, following appeals for emphases on actors' accounts as subjects for sociological investigation (Lennon, 1989). The narrative study of lives is the most helpful research approach available to gain understandings of subjective

perspectives on key sociological and psychological issues (Atkinson, 1998; Josselson, 1996; Lieblich and Josselson, 1996), as it is one of the most powerful forms for expressing suffering and experiences related to suffering (Hyden, 1997), providing a valuable insight into inner and outer realities (Gluck and Patai, 1991). The advantage of studying illness narratives is that they make it possible to study the experience from a number of vantage points: 'as a social and cultural construct, as a transformation and expression of bodily suffering, and most of all as the suffering person's attempt to construct his or her world, to find his or her own life-work and life context' (Hyden, 1997: 64/65). Investigating emotion and stress-related illness among teachers requires exploring subjectivity or 'human lived experience' (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992: 1), and the context of that experience through physical, affective, cognitive, discursive, political, socio-cultural and historical dimensions.

Much research into teacher stress and burnout has been of a quantitative, psychological, or cross-sectional nature using statistical methods, surveys, and questionnaires (Travers and Cooper, 1996). While these approaches are useful, showing changes in the teaching profession, measures of the incidence of stress, some of the main factors involved, and the symptoms of stress-related illness, such methods provide inadequate tools for exploring social realities (Rudow, 1995). Statistical data fails to provide explanations and understandings concerning feelings, beliefs and values, and the meanings underpinning peoples' statements. Quantitative work does not provide a great understanding of the processual nature of stress and stress-related illness, how people's perspectives shape their actions, and how these actions are influenced by social transactions within organisational settings. A micro-political perspective is useful here providing 'a valuable and potent approach to understanding the woof and warp of the

fabric of everyday life in schools', and 'the realities of school life as people experience it' (Blase, 1991: 1).

This study was guided partly by the legacy of symbolic interactionism (Woods, 1992), which 'grounds and explains human actions in terms of the social construction and reconstruction of the self through social interaction' and where 'the thinking and feeling self, the action that springs from it and reconstructs it, and the context in which both the action and the self are formed are intimately and intricately connected' (Hargreaves and Tucker, 1991: 492). According to Blumer (1969: 2), 'human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them'. To delve beneath those layers of meaning necessitates an emphasis on 'thick description' (Geertz, 1975), described in Denzin (1989: 83) as:

Beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard.

To answer my research questions I explored the emotion of teacher stress through detailed individual testimony of illness trajectories (Strauss, 1987). The illness narrative, in particular, is a source of rich information about emotional lives. Bullough (1991: 1-2) argues, 'to begin to understand why teachers do what they do requires that their actions be situated historically and contextually and that the emphasis be placed on the meaning they make of their situation'. This can be done more effectively through interdisciplinary

and transdisciplinary work, crosscutting the humanities and social sciences (Denzin and Lincoln, 1996). An interpretive, naturalistic approach is better suited to giving the teacher voice (Sikes, Measor and Woods, 1985; Hyden, 1997), and aiding memory work (Crawford et al, 1992), reflection and analysis (Woods, 1993).

The life history approach allows us to 'tune into the process and flux of life, with all its uncertainties, vicissitudes, inconsistencies and ambiguities, but on a deeper scale, for they reach the subjective realities, pull in the historic, and contextualize the present within the total framework of individual lives' (Woods, 1982: 9-10). Teachers in this study drew extensively on biographical memory to enhance understandings of emotional contexts of their lives (Crawford et al, 1992). A longitudinal focus was essential to get beyond the public face of 'impression management' (Goffman, 1959).

The validity of qualitative research

Qualitative methods have often been criticised as not meeting the rigorous standards of scientific enquiry, with reservations about reliability, generalisability, and validity (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative accounts have been accused of producing fictions of the social world, distorted by researcher beliefs, values and prejudices (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). However, the rigour of scientific procedures, objectivity, and associated truth claims, has been in dispute for some time (Banister et al, 1994), with ongoing critiques of the politics and methods of positivism and post-positivism not only from traditional 'enemies', but also from insiders within the ethnographic movement (Altheide and Johnson, 1994; Hammersley and Gomm, 1997). Much statistical evidence, for example, rests on the assumption that people report accurately, that questionnaires and surveys provide value-free measures (Radley, 1994).

Feminist theorising, in particular, has demonstrated the framework-dependence of perception and understanding, where standpoints impact on the research process (Harding, 1987; Smith, 1987; Nicholson, 1990). Issues of truth, objectivity and bias in both scientific and social research have been rethought (Tuana, 1989; Harding, 1993; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Writers can no longer presume they can present objective, non-contested accounts of others' experiences (Denzin, 1997). As Hammersley (1992: 69) points out, in rejecting 'naïve realism', we acknowledge how 'judgments about the truth of knowledge claims rest on assumptions, many of which we are not consciously aware of, and most of which have not been subjected to rigorous testing'. Like Lather (1986), I believe there is no neutral research. The most researchers can do is create opportunities for exploring knowledges, ways-of-being in the world, and ways-of-seeing in the world (Romm, 1997).

Recently, there have been accusations of bias and poor quality aimed at educational research in particular (Tooley, 1998). The term 'bias' may reflect a criticism that the research process and analysis is partisan. On the other hand, it may be used as indicating positive features, as illuminating. More often, it is used to infer systematic error, as 'an antonym of objectivity' (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997, 2.1). Both interviewer and interviewee bias deserves careful attention (Kvale, 1996). I did not view interviewees as having access to 'truth'. However, Jung's view of the doctrine of 'psychological truth' or 'psychological reality' infers that 'because a belief is invested with great emotional significance it must therefore in some sense be true' (Brown, 1971: 43). I agree with W.I. Thomas' observations, quoted in Tavis, (1982: 17), that, 'If men (sic) define situations as real, they are real in their consequences'. Living in a particular setting gives rise to a particular way of viewing that setting (Delamont, 1992). Researching the same setting may give rise to differing accounts and interpretations. There is much in the

maxim that the researcher is the prime research instrument. Research is influenced by the biography, and beliefs and values of the researcher, the research community, and wider society. We are all 'children of our times'. As Woods (1986: 83) avers, we 'interpret the past through our current mental frameworks and invariably these facts become somewhat warped'. Some degree of 'bias' is therefore implicit within all research. There can be no 'ontological objectivity' (Eisner, 1993). I concur with Wolcott (1995: 165), who, distinguishing between 'good' and 'bad' bias, asserts, 'Good bias not only helps us get our work done; by lending focus, it is essential to the performance of any research'. Wolcott further argues that bias is problematic when it holds excessive influence over the research process, and becomes prejudicial to 'disciplined subjectivity'. In this research I aimed to achieve such 'disciplined subjectivity' through the development of 'an orientation of discursive accountability' (Romm, 1997), where theoretical sensitivity may be protective against accusations of bias.

Developing theoretical sensitivity

'Theoretical sensitivity' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 280) involves 'having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and capability to separate the pertinent from what isn't' (ibid: 41/42). It has many sources. For me, one source was my professional practice in secondary teaching. Several of my interviewees commented on how necessary it was to them that I had personal understanding of the issues involved in teacher stress, background knowledge and some shared understandings of their working lives, and a shared status (Platt, 1981). I also had personal experience of many of the life events experienced by these teachers. Sensitivity was enhanced through the counselling voice, giving conceptual insight into the similarities and differences allied

to events such as stress, bereavement, divorce, and ill-health (see appendix 1). I gave myself a thorough grounding in disciplinary and professional knowledge, and in the educational, psychological and sociological literature on stress, stress-related illness, and emotion (see chapter1). This involved extensive study of ethnographic principles (Spradley, 1979; Wolcott, 1985; Stacey, 1991; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), and qualitative methodological issues (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1989; LeCompte et al, 1992; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Maxwell, 1996).

Verification was aided by 'reciprocal shaping' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) from teachers, partners and children in the sample. This research thus entailed a collaborative approach which many interviewees found empowering, giving them the opportunity to share in the construction of their narrative (Woods, 1993). In so doing, they added to the legitimization of the project through actively critiquing both their own accounts and some of my interpretations. This also allowed them to make small alterations to their stories, where they felt particular details might expose their identity. As Measor and Sikes (1992: 219) point out, some of the best ethical safeguards are derived from processes of respondent validation, where interviewees and interviewers can check understandings and challenge perceptions and accounts.

In research situations, it can be helpful to have 'deep familiarity' (Goffman, 1989: 130), or 'intimate familiarity' getting 'physically, socially, and emotionally close to whatever people are under study' (Lofland, 1995: 45), as well as the ability to 'make the familiar strange' (Delamont and Atkinson, 1996). As Ely et al (1991:17) argue, 'It seems it is increasingly important to study the familiar, but without the blinders that familiarity often attaches to us'. Theoretical sensitivity can be aided by 'familiarity'.

Throughout years of practice in a field, one acquires an understanding of how things work in that field, and why, and what will happen there under certain conditions. This knowledge, even if implicit, is taken into the research situation and helps you to understand events and actions seen and heard, and to do so more quickly than if you did not bring this background into the research. (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 42)

However, there are dangers in familiarity blocking other insights necessitating a 'critical mode towards our own, and each other's constructions' (Woods, 1998: 12). Through peer review from colleagues, conference feedback, and through constant comparisons, theoretical questioning, theoretical sampling, concept development and their relationships, and searching for discrepant data, my 'blindness' were challenged, helping me 'fight familiarity' (Delamont and Atkinson, 1995), and enhancing creativity within data collection and the analytic process (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Interviewing

To accomplish the research task, I focused on semi-structured, open-ended in-depth interviewing techniques. Interviews are 'interpretively active, implicating meaning-making practices on the part of both interviewers and respondents', creative social interactions, open to searches for mutual understanding (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995: 4). They are 'not so much repositories of knowledge – treasures of information awaiting excavation – as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers' (ibid: 4). My aim was to create a dialogue characterised by reciprocity, authenticity, and intersubjectivity, validating the 'private, emotional, interiorised, intimate world' (Cook

and Fanow, 1985: 5) where feelings and ideas, public and private discourses, are more likely to flow uninterrupted.

In Appendix 1, I discuss some of the problems inherent in exploring areas of personal lives where there is a high possibility that the sharing of emotional distress might mean interviews become stressful experiences themselves, as active interviewing involves 'encouraging subjective relevancies prompting interpretive possibilities, facilitating narrative linkages, suggesting alternative perspectives, and appreciating diverse horizons of meaning' (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995: 78). Since '[the] ethnographic method exposes subjects to far greater danger and exploitation than do more positivist, abstract, and "masculinist" research methods ... the greater the intimacy ... the greater the danger' (Stacey, 1991: 114), measures were taken in planning the research to identify possible risks, minimise distress and protect both interviewee and interviewer (Sieber, 1992: 79).

Introductory letters were sent to all participants outlining the basic premises of the project. While all risks cannot be identified, those foreseen can be provided for (Sieber, 1992). Initial contact letters and published statements gave brief outlines of the project. Interviewees were fully informed both about the project itself, and of potential 'worm-stirring' by telephone before initiating interview schedules. In these conversations I laid out the proposed interview contract, including their safety being of paramount importance, the setting of boundaries, areas to be covered, probable requirements in time and depth, the impact of interactive thinking/feeling processes and 'opening the can' (Appendix 1) as both distressing and cathartic, confidentiality, security and ownership of data, data negotiation, the principles of informed consent and their right to cease at any time, support networks, and possible uses of findings. My intention was to check understanding again in person. However, in the initial telephone conversation,

narratives spilled out before participants entered contracts. Similarly, I was occasionally unable to explore ethical issues before the first face-to-face interview began. As soon as I crossed the threshold, some participants began to give their narrative, inviting me into the kitchen as they made beverages. They had often prepared well, bringing notes and diary entries. Since I had already explored these issues on the telephone, I felt it best not to interrupt the flow, and to check understanding before turning on the tape later.

In initial telephone conversations, I also ascertained what supports might be already available. Fourteen interviewees were in touch with counselling services and/or psychiatrists, or had access to supportive general practitioners, skilled family members, and friends. For others, I made contact with a counselling service. For the first interview, eight had prepared themselves for possible distress, with close friends or relatives standing by. Luke, for example, several years post-breakdown, still felt vulnerable, arranged for his mother to be in his home on the afternoon of the first interview. He was openly nervous. Over tea, I enthused about the countryside and his beautiful village. As a fellow musician I commented on the variety of musical equipment around. We chatted about musical tastes and my son's GCSE music exam. A fellow cat lover, he introduced me to his cats. We then discussed ethical issues, and began the interview on safe ground with pleasant memories of primary school. In common with others, Luke's feelings between interviews 1 and 2 led him to feel very anxious. Before I arrived, he prepared himself through meditation. Since there may be a need for professional intervention between sessions, or a need to discuss emergent issues, I gave everyone my telephone number, advising them to call if they needed to talk. Only two participants took up this opportunity, making one phone call each. With one participant, who was not demonstrating recovery, I suggested professional intervention might prove helpful. This was refused.

Interviews may be distressing for the interviewer also. I discuss interviewer issues in chapter 8 and Appendix 1.

Participants were at different stages in the illness trajectory, some receiving therapeutic interventions such as counselling and medication, some well into the recovery process, others experiencing false recoveries and relapse. All were fragile and vulnerable. I anticipated interviews would be characterised by improvisational qualities, following interviewee's positional shifts. I therefore adopted a humanistic framework for interviewing derived from person-centred counselling, characterized by congruence (genuineness and authenticity), empathic understanding (sensitivity to interviewees' frames of reference), and unconditional positive regard (non-judgemental, with respect, acceptance and trust in interviewees' worth) (Rogers, 1951; Mearns and Thorne, 1988). I understood this as encouraging a facilitative relationship, enabling the development of rapport, and most likely to provide protection and support for both interviewee and interviewer with respect to the confidences disclosed and the emotions aroused and expressed (Brannen, 1988).

Initial interviews revealed the sensitive nature of this project. Body language and voice tone indicated the extreme distress teachers felt while recalling painful memories. Occasionally voice tone was so lowered, when speaking of issues threatening identity, that transcription was very difficult. In initial interviews, I learned that being too non-directive may cause anxiety (Woods, 1982). It became evident that, while some participants had thought a great deal about what they wished to say, launching into their narrative with little input from me, others needed a more structured interview, with me taking a leading role. In all further interviews, participants were encouraged to tell their stories in their own way (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). I took a postcard, with emergent

themes from previous interviews, in to each subsequent interview, to which I occasionally referred. In the vast majority of interviews, the narrator's interests were dominant, with only occasional gentle open-ended probes to clarify or expand on key emergent issues. While this approach produced some problems in teachers sometimes concentrating on topics seemingly not pertinent to the research topic, perceptions of the pressures on their own lives fed into theorising.

Fieldwork: The Research Process

The interview sample: teachers

Twenty-one secondary teachers, ten women and eleven men, were interviewed individually between one and nine times over a period of nineteen months. The important criteria in selecting this sample were that all had experienced stress-related illness that had been professionally diagnosed by GP's, and had incurred absence from school within the past five years. Some characteristics of these teachers are shown in Table 1 (Appendix 3).

The first stage of the research was with four teachers I had previously known in 'Castlerigg' Comprehensive, one of four schools allied to the sixth-form consortium where I had been teaching. Contact with these teachers was initially made at the suggestion of a friend in this school. Two of these teachers (one male, one female) had left teaching, taking voluntary early retirement. Two (one male, one female) had returned to teaching after a period of stress-related illness. One of these interviews led to contact with a fifth participant from this same school, who was now in other employment.

The second stage of the research involved consulting two ex-teachers now involved in a local authority service offering stress management courses to schools, and counselling to teachers. They sent letters to 18 schools on their Stress Facilitators Network list. One school replied. Yvonne, a deputy head in Walton Green contacted me with the names of four teachers who agreed to interviews. An interview with Yvonne later gave some insight into organisational responses to stress-related illness within Walton Green. A subsequent interview with her had to be cancelled as she, herself, was absent through stress-related illness, prior to taking early retirement through ill-health.

The charity Stress at Work offers independent counselling services, seminars and courses. Professor Peter Woods and I met with the one of the directors, Peter Pyranty, who sent letters to some teacher clients he felt were sufficiently recovered from stress-related illness to take part in this research. Four volunteered to tell their story, a fifth teacher later becoming part of the sample. I later interviewed Peter Pyranty to ascertain his ideas about the nature and course of teacher stress.

For the final stage in the research I interviewed three participants obtained through direct teacher union contacts, and four who answered an advertisement placed in union magazines.

Because of the sensitive nature of this research, the sample had to be made up of people who were a) at a stage in the illness trajectory (see chapter 3) where they felt an element of safety in disclosure, b) articulate, and c) willing to talk in considerable intimate detail. All participants were self-selected, and not representative of secondary teaching in the whole country. This was therefore a 'snowball sample', the sample selected by 'asking

key figures for people they think will be important or useful to include' (Coolican, 1994: 45).

From my own experience I knew Castlerigg Comprehensive could be termed a 'high-burnout' school. The testimonies of teachers from Walton Green led me to believe this school also had high levels of burnout. I sought to interview teachers from a self-designated 'low-burnout' school. I consulted a headteacher on the board of Stress at Work, who offered some insight into the strategies he believed minimised the occurrence of stress within his school. Unfortunately he refused access to members of his staff to validate these beliefs. Despite many telephone calls, I was unable to find a school where levels of stress were reportedly low, and had to abandon that part of the project.

Family interviews

Ten partners [8 female, 2 male] agreed to be interviewed. Initially the purpose of interviewing spouses/partners was for triangulation and validation purposes, and to investigate the illness trajectory from the partner's point of view, in particular the illness plateau (Strauss, 1987). Some teachers found the memory work (Crawford et al, 1992) involved in recalling the acute illness phase difficult, 'a time of nothingness' (Stephen). As Terence explained, 'It may come back to me but my wife may be able to reflect far better on the situation than I can'.

In view of the sensitive nature of the study and the varying degrees of illness and recovery involved, all couples were given the option of being interviewed together or separately. Three couples were interviewed together, Andrew and Sarah, Gareth and

Marjorie, Ralph and Gina. Olivia, Pauline, Lyndsey, Frank, Stuart, Jo and Alicia were interviewed alone. In two families, teenaged children volunteered to give their experiences.

The first partner interview provided much evidence of emotional trauma and changes in emotional structures in the home. In subsequent interviews I focused more on the emotional impact on the family. As in Holstein and Gubrium (1995), partners tended to talk more of their own lives than their partners' lives when interviewed alone than together. In particular, those with teaching careers talked of the stresses within their own workplaces. This was especially useful when they taught in the same environment. Joint interviews gave more meaningful contrasts and linkages, extended the horizon of meaning, and encouraged elaboration. While they challenged each other's stories, they affirmed their mutual bond. There was both humour and pathos in these visits.

Four partners felt unable to take part. One male, an ex-teacher, unable to work due to stress-related illness, was still too vulnerable to cope with this type of interview. Two males felt too angry about what had happened to their wives to become involved. One female, also in teaching, felt the study might raise issues she was not prepared to deal with. Five informants [3 females, 2 males] were no longer in a relationship or were in new relationships. One husband's working pattern meant he could not be interviewed. I talked with Emily's husband, an ex-teacher, over lunch.

One participant, Morag, withdrew after the first interview. Keen to give her narrative, she was clearly uncomfortable, curling up into a fetal position as she described distressing critical incidents in school. Her new partner, who remained in the same room during the interview, stopped the interview after 45 minutes. Feeling a further visit

unwise, I suggested she withdraw. However, she wanted her voice to be heard, insisting on making another appointment. She twice forgot subsequent visits, and, by telephone, I cancelled further contact, as I felt this was too disturbing for her. She was in contact with a counselling agency. I knew help was available if she sought it.

Data collection

Data was collected through interviews, and through the examination of appraisal documents, letters and memos between teachers, colleagues and governors, diaries, and personal writings. Interviewees were encouraged to reflect between meetings both on past interviews and in preparation for the next. For some, such as Maureen, Rachel and Ralph, this involved keeping a diary. Further triangulation of methods was also enabled through interviews with colleagues, family members and children. Field notes, completed after each interview, were collected in a fieldwork file. I recorded my thoughts and feelings regarding the process and progress of the research in field diaries. Each morning during much of the first two years, I spent approximately half an hour doing 'morning pages', three pages of free flow, long hand, stream-of-consciousness writing (Cameron, 1994). These enhanced my levels of creativity and reflexivity. For example, it was often during this writing that I came to identify prominent themes in the data, which contributed to theorising, literature searches and preliminary analysis. I discuss these in the next section.

Interviews were recorded on tape, using a small audio recorder. I took virtually no notes throughout interviews, as these can interrupt the flow of communication. In the first stage, I transcribed tapes myself. While this had advantages in aiding my memory of voice tone and body language, the large number of tapes, and the time consumed

through transcription, meant that most subsequent tapes were fully professionally transcribed.

Interviews took place mainly in teachers' homes, six taking place in the workplace, and generally lasted two to three hours, with around one and a half hours being taped. We took time out for coffee breaks. I had lunch with several participants. After each interview, I stopped in a lay-by to record my recollections of these untaped conversations in fieldnote diaries.

Data analysis

I carried out analysis using grounded theory techniques (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This firstly involved open coding, the identification and coding of categories of importance to interviewees (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

In preliminary analysis, I found teachers focused much attention on individual and collective emotional dimensions of stress-related illness. All transcriptions were then searched for references to any emotional features of teachers' lives. This included the use of emotion-words such as love, joy, happy, wonderful, sad, frustrated, angry, guilty, and ashamed, terms such as 'I feel', 'I think', 'I believe', and passages where body language and voice tone indicated the experience of emotion. This created a lengthy emotions file for each participant, Marcus' for example, encompassing 32 pages (over 12,000 words). These were categorised as emotions of the illness trajectory, the emotional self, emotional relationships with colleagues, emotional relationships with students, emotional relationships with students' parents, emotions relating to work,

emotions within the home, emotions within families of origin, emotions of self-renewal, beliefs about emotions, gendered emotion, and emotion within the research experience. The nature of some data extracts resulted in their inclusion in several categories.

Emerging categories guided the research focus. Through 'theoretical sampling' and 'progressive focusing' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), these were subcategorised into themes, the emotions relating to 'work' file, for example, including:

- Positive emotional experiences,
- Negative emotional experiences,
- Coping strategies (individual and collective),
- Crisis Interventions (individual and collective),
- Emotional labour,
- Emotional climate,
- Emotion competencies (individual and collective),

Some themes yielded sub-themes. Emotional competencies, for instance, included sub-themes such as confidence, communication, decision-making, awareness, autonomy, empathy, managing emotions (self and others), managing change and managing conflict.

Early theorising led to an investigation of the literature on the sociology and psychology of emotion, the sociology of health and illness, and emotions within organisations. This brought up many areas of analytical interest such as feeling 'rules' or codes, emotional labour, the emotion management dichotomy (prescribed, regulated by others, and autonomous, regulated by the self (Tolich, 1993), and emotive dissonance (the conflict between what people feel, what people want to feel, what people think they should feel,

and what people try to feel (Hochschild, 1979: 565). Comparative analysis was also aided by regular discussion with members of a research group where others were involved in researching stress, emotions, and creativity (Woods et al, 1998).

Leaving the field and maintaining contact

The process of leaving the field is as important as the process of entering the field, disengagement sometimes a stressful experience, fraught with difficulties (Shaffir and Stebbins, 1991). Ideally one disengages when one reaches the point of 'diminishing analytic returns' (Delamont, 1992: 140). While I conducted many interviews, and achieved this with most of my participants, I do not believe I reached saturation point with several interviewees. I had accumulated a large amount of data and felt it prudent to begin the discarding process rather than collecting more (Wolcott, 1995). An exploration of readiness to cease formal contact, and of therapeutic outcomes within the research experience, signalled the time to end interviewing (Appendix 1). However, the reflexive process has led me to believe that my own declining health was another factor precipitating leaving the field.

My relationship with the large majority of interviewees remains open partly as a function of my contractual commitment (Maines, Shaffir and Turowetz, 1980). In order to publish any material, such as 'Opening the Can of Worms' (Appendix 1), contracts stipulated I seek permission from participants.

This chapter concludes the introductory section of this thesis. In chapters 3-7, I explore teachers' data, with conclusions following in chapter 8. I begin, in chapter 3, with a

consideration of individual emotional destabilisation within the downward spiral of the illness trajectory.

CHAPTER 3. EMOTIONAL DESTABILISATION WITHIN THE ILLNESS TRAJECTORY

I was obviously very stressed, not sleeping. I became depressed. At the time I didn't notice it - a whole spiralling downwards. My sense of humour went. Physically and mentally I was ill. The whole thing snowballed. One thing led to another. My blood pressure went through the roof, my diabetes, my blood sugar level, shooting all over the place. (Terence)

In chapters 3-7, I explore aspects of teachers' illness trajectories, examining perceived influences on illness courses and outcomes, the work involved in teacher care, and problems in balancing employment, medical care, everyday life tasks, family illness, and personal accommodation to illness.

The sociological concept of trajectory (Strauss et al, 1985; Corbin and Strauss, 1988) refers not only to the course of an illness, 'the physiological unfolding of a patient's disease' (Strauss et al, 1985: 8), but also to the 'total *organization of work* done over that course, plus the *impact* on those involved with that work and its organization' (ibid: 8). In this chapter I explore the emotional experience of the downward phase of the stress illness trajectory, where 'life in and out of school has been complete and utter hell' (Sally). Key themes identified by my teachers were the physical, cognitive and emotional signals of distress, the loss of positive emotional experiences, the accumulation of negative emotional experiences, and emotional dysregulation (Gottman et al, 1997). Teachers described losses in key emotional competencies, and in teacher skills and identity, culminating for 16 of them, in complete emotional breakdown.

Physical Signals of Distress

Stress can influence health directly through chronic over-arousal (Selye, 1976; Marmot et al, 1991). Griffith et al (1999) found stressed classroom teachers have elevated levels of heart rate and blood pressure late into evenings. Physiological dysfunction occurs when the body's active coping strategies no longer effectively establish homeostasis (Bartlett, 1998). Sustained high levels of hormones such as cortisol and catecholamine affect the functioning of endocrine, autonomic and muscular systems, the immune system, cardiovascular function, and the gastro-intestinal system (Cox, 1993). Emotional states play a causal role in the generation of illness, and vice versa. Where 'chemical signals create and/or organize behavioural states ... their activity and regulatory feedback loops play important roles in initiating and sustaining the mood and emotional states that can promote disease' (Leventhal and Patrick-Miller, 1993: 373). Possible health consequences of the long-term effects of stress caused my teachers further anxiety, sustaining feedback loops:

I'd become dependent on the adrenaline I must have been living on to sustain that workload. Somewhere down the road I'll end up paying the price for stress, permanent long-term damage to major organs. (Ralph)

As stress emotions took hold, the body mobilised. There was increasing concern over physical illnesses and sleep deprivation.

Physical illness

Physical illnesses come because you've become exhausted. My head feels fuzzy, as if in cotton-wool, as if the room is slightly darkened, a fog around me. My lateral vision is impaired. I can see straight in front. I want to go back to sleep, my body, my brain, saying no. (Marcus)

Teachers in this sample reported a range of psychosomatic disorders. Emily viewed her spinal pain as 'emotional pain ... a vicious circle of tension'. Similarly, Rachel's

body was shouting. When you're stressed, you can't breathe properly. You end up with physical symptoms building up, backache, aches and pains, problems with my neck. As I got more and more tense, everything was going wrong, pains moving around the body, went on for months, the tic in my eye, eyes hurting.

Evidence suggests existing medical conditions are worsened by stress (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994). Taking time off work to manage personal illness resulted in feelings of guilt. Terence was

made to feel very guilty when I went to the diabetic clinic ... There was no flexibility. You were there when school started. You had to be there at the end. There was no way of getting out during the day if you needed to. Heaven forbid if I needed to go to the dentist!

Symptoms were manifest within differing sites in accordance with individual emotional, physical and cognitive vulnerability (Bartlett, 1998). Marcus and Ralph recently developed adult asthma. Stomach problems were common, diagnosed as irritable bowel syndrome for Marcus, Celia, and Emily. Celia 'had awful chest pain ... a lot of diarrhoea'. Marcus experienced 'severe indigestion, stomach bloating so I couldn't tighten my trousers, had to sit with a tracksuit on, or two buttons open, an enormous amount of wind, and a feeling of debilitation'. For Margot, chronic anxiety led to jaw dislocation:

The pain was incredible, like neuralgia all the time, headaches right across the whole of my skull to the point where I couldn't bear it. I couldn't sleep. I thought I was having terrible teeth problems. I had root canal fillings done and taken out, teeth taken out. Then I saw a face muscle specialist who said: 'You've a dysfunction of the jaw. You're under so much stress, you've pushed your jaw completely out, biting so hard, clenching so strongly'.

Her consultant recommended six weeks complete rest, wearing a mouth guard both day and night.

The inability to fight common infections was widespread, signalling deficiencies in the immune system (Cohen and Williamson, 1991; Petrie et al, 1998). Antibiotics were regularly prescribed. Working with children, teachers are exposed to various potential infectious agents. They described an inability to recover from minor illness such as viral infections, 'the physical side of it ... generally coming down with chest ailments, a cold, flu that lasts longer than other people' (Marcus). Rebecca had recurrent gum infections.

‘Whenever I’m stressed or low, my whole face comes up. It kept doing that. It was awful. I just felt so low’.

Disturbances in sleep patterns

Negative emotion commonly precipitates insomnia, through pain, depression, new environmental conditions (Morris, 1993), bereavement (Coren, 1994), anxiety, sadness, and anger (Karacan et al, 1983). Consequences of sleep deprivation include apathy and restlessness, an inability to recognise and correct task errors, conversation rambling and memory difficulties (Kolb and Brodie, 1982), cognitive deterioration and reduced performance in psychomotor skills (Irwin, 1989).

Emotional dysregulation (see below) led to ‘tiredness all the time, an inability to sleep’ (Marcus). Andrew was

waking in the middle of the night thinking about schoolwork. Was everything in order? I must look at my mark book later. Make sure I hadn’t missed out anything. I thought: ‘I’ve got to stop thinking about this’, and I couldn’t.

Dreams were disturbing. Marcus feared violent thoughts from dreams would erupt in his classroom, and worried about ‘attacking someone physically’. Charlotte’s ‘very strange dreams’ were upsetting:

Kids kept falling in fucking wells. I lost fifteen. I was falling down, crashing through trees, undergrowth, or wells, trying to hang on, slipping down, down, down, and I thought I'm breaking down here.

Dreams were signals to the self, telling them to 'slow down. Take your time' (Charlotte). A dream made Rachel realise she'd

got to stop. I woke up crying. Can't remember what it was about. Something to do with not having done marking! I'd got large quantities! I sat up in bed, ricked my neck, pins and needles, my feet hurting.

Emily's 'organisational nightmares' about 'challenging situations in the classroom where we had ongoing situations' affected her physically, 'nightmares about shit, which we won't go into, very messy'.

Anxiety, retrospective and prospective, led to early waking, an inability to turn off intrusive thoughts and feelings increasing emotional exhaustion. 'I was so tense and wound up. I was waking 2, 3 in the morning, not able to go back to sleep, worrying' (Rachel). Disturbed sleep was 'not too bad if it's one night a week, but when it's more than one, it's horrendous. You can't keep going. You feel so ill' (Margot). For some, a pattern of working late into the night, often not going to bed until two or three in the morning and early rising emerged. Three hours sleep became the norm for Ralph. Alex, Ralph and Charlotte experienced nights with no sleep. 'I got into that pattern' (Charlotte). A vicious, reinforcing cycle of chronic fatigue developed. As anxiety levels increased, sleep decreased, further increasing anxiety, resulting in further lack of sleep.

The combination of stress and sleep deprivation may well have depressed immune system responses further (Irwin, 1989)

Cognitive Signals of Distress

Once in a stressful situation, you can't think. It all goes blank. (Rachel)

Teachers experienced a loss of cognitive agility (Shirom, 1989). As Goleman (1995: 149) writes, when people are emotionally upset, they 'cannot remember, attend, learn, or make decisions clearly. As one management consultant put it "stress makes people stupid"'. There were losses in information processing, memory and decision-making, linked to feelings of exhaustion, confidence, anxiety and competency. 'My thought processes were showing signs of stress. We always mention the physical side but I wasn't thinking clearly (Ralph). 'My brain wasn't working properly' (Maureen). 'I was losing my memory' (Sally). Marcus 'would regularly put things down, not remember where I'd put them, have to retrace my steps. ... In the middle of a sentence, it will take some time to come out. My wife will plug it in for me'. Rachel recalled 'difficulty in sorting. Sheets, towels, things got muddled up'. Simple decision-making became difficult. Rachel remembered 'dithering, standing between the fridge and the cupboard, not knowing which way to turn, couldn't decide whether to go to the fridge and get the milk out first, whether to go to the cupboard for the tea things, or get the mug out first. I couldn't make the decision. That was chronic, desperate'. Stress made Andrew

make mistakes. Worry about mistakes knocked my confidence further. It just built up. I remember coming home, saying to my wife, 'I feel I'm getting worse, forgetting things, not doing things right'.

Stress also impaired the ability to deal with computers, a skill increasingly required of teachers. William's wife Lindsey observed him getting 'slower and slower'. Rachel gained insight into cognitive difficulties when her psychiatrist asked, 'How do you get on with computers?' She replied, 'Negative, totally negative'. Her psychiatrist was 'not surprised People who are depressed tend to find computers' difficult'. Another sign of cognitive impairment was the inability to focus on more than one task. 'I wasn't able to get books marked and recorded at the same time. I could do one or the other' (Stephen). Similarly Lindsey recalled evenings where William marked books while she recorded grades. 'He couldn't do both'.

Emotional Signals of Distress

Somewhere along the way I lost control, almost as though I needed to let off steam. It came out in quite a lot of loopy ways ... I don't think I lived in the real world any of the time. (Morag)

When you are stressed, 'things go out of balance' (Sally), 'like the swing of a thermostat ... a bit too hot, then too cold, then too hot again' (Andrew). Teachers experienced much emotional turbulence, feeling caught in a 'downward spiral' (Edward), a 'whirlpool of distress' (Terence), 'trapped on a treadmill' (Stephen), in the 'depths of despair' (Charlotte). They lost positive emotional experiences such as pride,

satisfaction, fun, love, happiness, joy and hope. They experienced increased negative emotional experiences, of anger, shame, anxiety, fear, guilt, sadness, bitterness, resentment, frustration and despair.

The loss of positive emotional experiences

I like the positive stress side of this job, but you can't deal with that when there are negative stresses of that magnitude. (Alex)

According to Lazarus and Lazarus (1994), opportunities to gain positive emotion, are vital in balancing the emotional self. Acting as protectors against illness, they are instrumental in promoting bodily equanimity, generating and maintaining health and well-being through the release and distribution of positive stress hormones, both protecting against, and curing, illness and disease.

Teacher's attested to lives previously filled with rewarding positive emotional relationships with students and colleagues, 'sitting talking to kids in lessons, teasing things out of them, seeing the proverbial light bulb light up. Kids can be a real problem but also the creation of job satisfaction' (Ralph). 'For many, many years I was very happy. Never regretted making the change [of employment] until the last few years' (Andrew). Maureen

really enjoyed it. In principle it's the most wonderful thing in the world to walk into a classroom, give something of your own particular knowledge, open up students' minds to all those wonderful things in the world that are waiting

for them - like being in charge of a wonderful Christmas box of goodies every child can have.

Teaching now provided few positive emotional experiences with students. Charlotte 'used to love that feeling that you'd got a buzz in the room. It would feed you. It was like a charge. Like group lift. Kids do it so easily. That energy, that spirituality, that life force, is definitely lacking. I'm not being fed'. Previously, Margot had always enjoyed her work. 'I loved it. I begged my husband to go back after I had my children. In those days it was a vocation, something you thoroughly enjoyed'. Jonathon felt 'a lot of fun [had] gone out of the job. ... Where do I get my highs? To be honest, not many places'.

There were fewer positive emotional experiences with colleagues. Support networks disappeared under the pressures of work, which was doubly unfortunate since collegial support has an important role in ameliorating stress (Punch and Tuettemann, 1996). Gareth found 'very little common ground, very little camaraderie' in his department, which 'helped [him] feel isolated'. 'You don't have time to socialise with colleagues. It's a professionally busy world, a lot of women too busy to speak at work' (Rebecca). 'We used to have cream cakes at birthdays' (Stephen). 'It got to the stage where every time we did socialise all people were doing was moaning about the job. Then I couldn't do it any more. Teachers will talk of nothing else, especially when they're very depressed. Over the last five or six years it's just got worse' (Margot).

There was less perceived time for enjoying positive emotional experiences or health promoting activity. 'Hobbies that should make me relax didn't, got me more stressed out, always going wrong' (Rachel).

It's very important, having a stressful job, to have a social life and family life to keep the balance. My social life went totally to pot ... I was working every night, weekends, marking, work piling up and piling up, everything totally work-oriented. I was struggling, not keeping up with my social life, which I really had enjoyed. (Rebecca)

Important therapeutic outlets were lost. William ceased tending his allotment. Luke 'stopped reading ... I couldn't do my music, run a relationship, and do my job at the same time ... If I haven't got my music, I've got no release'. Margot 'hadn't time' for 'church, to meditate and pray. I do a lot of writing. For a year I hadn't. When I analysed what I'd done, everything had gone for school, a whole year of my life for school, appalling'. Edward stopped playing tennis, 'too busy ... I used to be very fond of singing. My singing voice is gone'. Andrew, a keen photographer, 'lost interest, stopped going to photographic club, stopped learning Italian, couldn't be bothered to go out. Things I enjoy doing, I didn't want to do. Struggling through the day, looking over my shoulder all the time, get home with a sigh of relief, collapsing into the chair, then the next day the same'.

As unfavourable conditions prevailed, opportunities for safeguarding and building emotional 'capital' (Williams, 1998) ceased. Negative emotion accumulated.

The accumulation of negative emotional experiences

There was a relentless, lengthy, wearing down process, without time for recovery. Holidays, once used to 'recuperate, achieve a better balance, overcome the stress of the

year' (Marcus), were now occupied with work, re-writing syllabi, and adapting to new subject areas.

If you don't recuperate you've a problem. By the time October comes round, you're at an even lower ebb. I'd never relaxed in the summer. Went back under par. Stress and strains occurred straight away, heavier timetable, more aggro from management, a little bit of management bullying, then came down with flu. (Marcus)

Teachers experienced a 'gradual deterioration in the quality of life' (Marcus), a catalogue of 'big disappointments' (Edward), 'a year of great tension gradually wore me down' (Andrew), pressures 'building up over a long period of time' (Stephen). There was an increase in negative affect. 'I was very negative about it all' (Terence). 'I'd be unreasonably hurt, like having PMT all the time. Anything they said that was a bit out, I'd get very upset by it' (Charlotte). Lazarus and Lazarus (1994: 266/7) define negativity as 'the belief that the world is hostile and dangerous so that the slightest sign an encounter will turn out negatively is promoted into a disaster'. Margot was

so sick of the world. The twentieth century was terrifying, the fast pace of life, people using me, and abusing me. It wasn't just one. It was hundreds! I felt everybody was doing that. You tend to start looking into things with almost an evil eye.

Andrew felt

very despondent. At the height of my depression, any minor upset would become extremely big. I would think of all the consequences. If there were something wrong with me, it would be cancer. It wouldn't just be 'I've got a cold'. I would always look on the black side for that year.

This was perceived as a change in health status. Andrew, for instance, 'wasn't like that before. I used to be fairly optimistic but I just got gradually more and more pessimistic'. Edward used to be a 'stoic ... a bit of a 'Pollyanna'. Something will turn up'. During the recovery process, Maureen 'suddenly discovered how many things I really felt good about, but I'd swept them under the carpet because I was feeling so bad!' 'Feeling bad' was *the* common factor amongst these teachers. Jessica's husband Frank, related how 'the stress and mental anguish was just totally getting on top of her. If you'd talked to Jessica a few months ago, she would have said there were none [positive experiences]. Everything's negative, nothing's positive'.

The preponderance of negative emotion led to problems in emotion regulation.

Emotional dysregulation

Emotional 'dysregulation' refers to frequent difficulty in controlling, regulating, and recovering from emotions, and which requires help to overcome (Gottman et al, 1997). Teachers highlighted increasing difficulties in managing emotion, recovering from emotional distress, and dealing with historical emotionality.

- Managing emotion

This involves 'the ability to manage anger, frustration, anxiety, and sadness, avoiding self-destructive behaviour, and monitoring self-criticism' (Klein, 1997). My teachers experienced problems in these areas.

According to Selye (1974: 134), 'the stress of frustration is particularly harmful'. All these teachers expressed great frustration with teaching worlds. Edward, for example, with early experience of teaching in Africa, where he observed a positive work ethic, 'always resented the fact that British students don't want to learn, don't value education. The attitude of students here really got me down. Any stress I felt was from frustration and disappointment, a feeling of futility. It led to a feeling of disaffection'.

Margot was

full of guilt ... Getting over the guilt, being away from school, was absolutely horrendous. I'd let my students down ... I'd let my family down, let my mother down. She's been dead for years, but I felt this incredible guilt thing. How could I have not been able to cope? You always had to cope.

Sadness was common, signalled, for example, by uncontrollable crying. Rachel 'kept bursting into tears', Charlotte 'crying a lot but didn't know why, over things I wouldn't normally cry about'.

Teachers felt very strongly about unresolved issues within school. Sally felt 'absolute fury ... I was absolutely livid'. Maureen was 'screaming inside'. Teachers were increasingly unable to avoid self-destructive behaviours. Feeling 'out of control' was a major factor. Rebecca for example, a 'control freak' had been 'totally out of control for over a year'.

Teachers felt stress resulted in their losing tempers and abusing children in their care. Marcus, for example, experienced a 'red mist' of 'uncontrollable explosive emotion', and 'verbal aggression'.

Going over the top in my reaction to pupils ... I'd fly off the handle very quickly, yell and swear at them from a very short distance, get my face right up against theirs, tell them what I thought about them, how they should be behaving. Bullying really. It would make my stomach churn inside. I'd feel physically clammy or hot, shaking. Because I was yelling and bawling, my eyes would water. My vision, my voice would go. I'd actually hurt my throat. I must have been in a high emotional state to react like that.

Charlotte recalled standing in front of her headteacher, eyes tight shut, fists clenched, screaming, 'I hate you! I hate you! I hate you!'

Emotional self-regulation is said to be a key personal competency (Goleman, 1998). However, for my teachers managing emotion was also interpersonal, a social process, where social transactions performed regulatory roles through interpersonal reflection and communication. Morag illustrates this well:

I got wilder and wilder. It was like a massive explosion! I exploded because, as well as not having input from the bottom end up, there was nobody to put a cap on it. There was only me. There was nobody saying 'Stop'. Nobody to control me, and I couldn't control myself. I just got swept away.

- Recovering from emotional distress

Teachers here found it increasingly difficult to recover from distressing social transactions, carrying distress into other situations.

Things didn't used to bother me. It makes you feel sad. Something trivial. Someone's cut you up at traffic lights. No-one got hurt. It's spoilt my drive, spoilt my day. Why did they cut me up? I got all worked up about it. I know it's illogical to dwell on such things but it upset me for some time. (Andrew)

As emotional signals were unrecognised, and goals not achieved, teachers experienced a chain of emotional reactions. 'I felt shame at being angry' (Jonathon). 'My fear of failure was controlling me' (Andrew). Alex described fear of anticipated social transactions with students and colleagues as a 'nightmare':

The fear of going to school, going out of the house, it was hard getting there. I remember driving, screaming in tears, saying: 'You have got to go. You have got to go'. Fighting literally. Frightened to get back ... I didn't fear when I was there. It was going. It was fear of fear.

Such meta-emotions, 'feelings about feelings' (Gottman et al, 1997: 6), were characterised by recursiveness, 'acting back on themselves in never ending loops' (Scheff, 1990: 18). Teachers described feeling ashamed of feeling ashamed, angry about feeling angry, ashamed at feeling anger, angry at feeling shame, ashamed at feeling jealous. Unable to deal with these emotions, to gain understanding of them, or prevent their escalation in social encounters, they became caught in 'feeling traps', where brief emotion states are converted into long-term states (Scheff, 1990: 171). Narratives revealed long-term feeling states fuelled by 'futility', 'disaffection', 'frustration', 'hopelessness', 'despair', 'sadness', 'devastation', 'disappointment', and 'disgust' with themselves and others. 'Anxiety-fright', concerning uncertain harmful threats, which are anticipated and endanger well-being (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994), was common. They described fear of future emotion states, of loss of control, of anger, guilt, fear, resentment, jealousy, embarrassment, and anxiety. Terms used here included feeling 'apprehensive', 'worried', 'petrified', 'horrified'.

Teachers also feared displacing emotion in frequently distressing transactions with students and colleagues (see chapters 4 and 6). 'I was frightened of what I might do with certain kids, mainly lads, if they came up against me. I was so angry at my partner, I was literally worried I might hit out' (Alex). 'When you lose your temper things can get dangerous ... If I go back, my temper will snap' (Sally). 'I was worried I'd push a kid out the window' (Marcus). Displacement of emotion fed feeling traps, inhibiting recovery from emotional distress. Both ventilation and suppression of emotion (see chapter 6) inhibited recovery. Ventilating anger, for instance, may be cathartic in reducing feelings of powerlessness and hormonal threat, in restoring a hormonal balance and a sense of control, and in heightening awareness to emotional distress, signalling the

need for understanding and problem solving (Tavris, 1982). However, when anger is not seen as an important social signal to the self and others, or when it does not result in problem-resolution, it tends to escalate out of control. Evidence suggests that aggressive anger expression may make people 'angrier, solidifies an angry attitude, and establishes a hostile habit', often resulting in chronic anger states and rumination, talking to oneself, 'obsessive, useless spin-wheeling' (ibid: 144). As in Lazarus (1990), the expression of uncontrolled anger can poison relationships with significant chronic costs contributing to continuing stress and resulting in illness (see chapter 6). Teachers became aggressive rather than assertive as their emotional signals were ignored or misunderstood within frustrating social transactions. Sally, for example,

sat there thinking: 'For God's sake, keep your mouth shut. Do what everyone else does'. In the end I got up and said I disagreed. I just went mad at him [deputy head], berserck. I was trying to shut up, but it all came out.

Teachers and their families recounted how ruminating anger heightened already high emotional states. Teachers held destructive conversations with themselves. 'I've always spoken to myself internally. When I was young it was very positive thinking. Not any more' (Alex). Fiona described the atmosphere at home as 'scary' as her father's rumination intensified. 'You always knew there was something wrong because everywhere you'd go, all you could hear was this mumble, mumble, mumble'.

Teachers also found that heightened emotional states reduced their 'emotional capital' to such an extent that emotional turbulence from the past resurfaced.

- Dealing with historical emotionality

I was crying so much because of all the baggage I'd got, crying for myself as well as for what happened to anyone else. I was thinking: 'Yes, *my* injustices, *my* injustices'. (Charlotte)

Emotion from past injustices compounded emotional distress:

The subconscious [was] affecting me consciously, repression. There's a lot of stuff there that's probably very disturbed. It goes beyond Mr Ballantyne and that damned school. Everything - like that merger. (Sally)

Teachers were overwhelmed by past as well as present emotion. Celia, a violinist and music teacher, well illustrates this point. Her 'baggage' contained 'so many stressful situations, so many setbacks':

My first marriage split up. I had a small breakdown then which I couldn't deal with because I had to earn the money, so I repressed it all ... I had to learn to use keyboards and music technology, quite stressful ... I got pregnant, resigned from my permanent job. At home with Gus proved more stressful than I'd bargained for. I'd worked for most of my first son's life. To be home looking after a baby was something I wasn't cut out to do, almost as stressful as going out to work. I didn't know how to be a person at home.

Returning to work was difficult. Celia, an experienced teacher, expensive to employ in a changed educational marketplace, found temporary employment, which was not made permanent, creating further disappointment.

I must have repressed how it made me feel. I put a lot of emotion and energy into that job, convinced I'd get it permanently. An NQT got it. That really floored me, another setback. I had to have two weeks off work, couldn't cope with a rejection of my skills.

Within seven weeks in another temporary post, Celia had a breakdown, viewing this as 'a throwback to a year of repressed feelings. ... I felt so angry! I'd repressed a lot of things about being controlled. It had to come out in the end'.

Alex experienced the death of his father in one year, then nursed his mother through cancer for the following two years, while trying to improve his qualifications through PhD study. Trying to teach full-time and complete his data collection proved impossible. A combination of repressed grief and feelings of failure 'all came flooding back' contributing to his first period of stress-related illness.

Marcus explained his strategy of putting his accumulated experiences in

the bottom drawer ... The divorce was the big one. I didn't deal with it. ... You suppress it for a long, long time. Then something else comes in, and you stick that in. Then somebody dies. You put that in. You have a big argument, or fall out with somebody, and you put that in. Eventually your bottom drawer

emotionally gets full, and the next thing over-flows. That's when your problems start.

It is the spilling over of the drawer, the 'reliving of the emotion that would make me cry or make me angry' (Marcus). Luke used the same metaphor:

The drawer was certainly getting full, with all that unease and unrest at school, feeling unsettled in school, the environment I was in at home, and with not grieving properly for the end of the relationship. Not knowing where I was going. That's when it all started to get bad.

Childhood emotion re-surfaced for Luke, Jonathon, Emily, Rachel, Rebecca, and Marcus, who experienced 'flashbacks' from past emotional traumas. 'The maggots are still there' (Marcus). Jonathon's mother has suffered manic-depression for over 30 years.

We got to the stage where there was no direction available but to put her into a residential home. I ended up being the one who implemented it. That was hard. Caused a lot of problems. That brings on a lot of past life experiences that you really want to be pushed away, start coming back to you.

For Emily, the 'years of chronic abuse and trauma' from two troubled marriages and school experiences triggered memories of childhood hospitalisation, separation anxiety, abandonment and depression. Rebecca, who suffered a disturbing sexual assault by a pupil on school premises, felt emotion from childhood experience resurfacing:

The assault in itself was horrible but it also got in touch with other things. It triggered in me strange thoughts and feelings. I feared it had taken the lid off something, that if anything happened again, I might not keep control I feared my own reactions very much.

Energies spent coping with emotional turbulence during the lengthy downward spiral resulted in a reduced capacity for managing emotion, recovering from emotional distress and building emotional capital (Williams, 1998). Rebecca felt 'very vulnerable, very fragile ... The effort of wondering what would come out next'. Teachers lost motivation. Alex 'didn't have the energy, time or emotional strength'. Key teacher competencies were lost.

The Loss of Emotional Competencies

Teachers not only manage their own hearts (Hochschild, 1983), but also those of students and colleagues, in order to manage the learning experience. However, these teachers could no longer do this successfully. 'You can no longer meet those expectations' (Jonathon).

Key themes here were the loss of empathy, confidence, and creativity, skills considered vital to the teaching task (Goleman, 1998).

Empathy

Empathy with students, colleagues and families suffered (see chapters 4-6). 'Good rapport with the kids diminished. A sense of antipathy developed between me and students' (Edward). 'I was under so much stress, I was not performing well, not my normal tactful self, criticising more than I should' (Margot).

Listening skills were impaired. 'If you're stressed out and worried about being all "bloused up" and what not, you get tight arsed. You can't hear what's happening. You're not child-centred any more because you become self-centred' (Charlotte). Teachers lost the abilities to sense and understand others' feelings, and to provide opportunities for developing children's emotional skills. 'I lost sight of the big picture, worrying about the minutiae of the job ... Seeing kids at the end of the day with reports and chasing those up rather than getting down to why is this kid on report? What are we going to do to change his/her behaviour?' (Ralph). They could no longer provide students, colleagues, family and friends with support. Alicia, Terence's wife, felt he 'lost time to listen to what [she] was saying'. Edward 'wasn't sympathetic to [his] wife Olivia when she needed it, or as interested in what she was doing'. Gareth, a part-time pastor

was marking, preparing lessons, thinking new schemes, new ways. Almost total attention directed towards [teaching] part-time. As a result, the pastoring wasn't what folks needed I'd totally thrown away any work God had for me.

Teachers were no longer able to provide emotional services for others:

When I didn't go into work and encourage other people to smile, I thought you're in a bad state if you can't smile, and you're in an even worse state if you can't encourage other people to smile. I couldn't cheer myself up, let alone cheer anyone else up. (Maureen)

Confidence

Teachers spoke of losing confidence in both the educational system and their own professionalism. 'The situation becomes so stressful you lose confidence in your own abilities. I had a real bashing in terms of self-esteem' (Maureen). Andrew typifies the loss in confidence and self-esteem, demonstrating this as a social process:

[School management] took away every bit of confidence ... It wasn't just that they made me believe I was useless at teaching. I felt useless at living. If I tried to do something, I'd do it wrong, break it, make it worse, which is why I sat about doing nothing. I'd maintained the car before and I thought: 'I can't do it. I'll do it wrong, mess it up. Better get it done properly at the garage'.

Andrew's wife, Sarah, told him

'It's not you. It's them. They're trying to break you down. You *can* do it'. 'No I can't', he said. He completely lost his confidence. I couldn't convince him. He was totally convinced in his uselessness. I was in despair. It didn't matter what I said. I couldn't persuade him he wasn't useless, that they had tried to make out he was.

Teaching is a creative art (Woods, 1996b), and among these teachers were some highly creative individuals. Under the experience of stress, however, the creative self was lost. For Luke, music is 'fundamental to existence ... I'm obsessed with music. It's my life'. He gradually lost time and motivation for composition and extemporisation, important therapeutic outlets and generators of positive affect. Morag, teaching art, 'used to think: "Hey, teaching, it's brilliant. I'm doing my hobby for a job"'. Then I realised I wasn't doing my hobby for a hobby'. Margot, too, ceased her own artistic endeavours. For Rebecca, another artist, her painting was 'hung on to through all sorts of traumas ... as an escape route when things have been hard. I couldn't throughout the whole of last year, just lost it completely. It's like losing my soul, very much part of my identity'.

Loss of the creative self not only impinged on personal identity, it impacted negatively on teaching. 'Because I was stressed, my creative ability was not functioning, my ability to think of new ways. I certainly wasn't applying any of my own educational communicative teaching. I wasn't able to think about the method at all' (Rachel). 'Going through some of these units I wrote, I'm basically going: "Yuck! Did I really write this rubbish?"' (Ralph).

Losses in empathy, confidence, and creativity reduced levels of competency. The stress experience was thus 'de-skilling' (Ralph), 'affecting the quality of my work' (Edward). Andrew 'couldn't do the job well any more'. This reinforced negative emotion states. Stephen felt 'guilty about what was not going right, not being on top of the job. I wasn't delivering the quality of education I'd been used to and that I wanted to do. That spirals

back again, fuels the failing part of it'. Feelings of professionalism were compromised, contributing to feelings of guilt and failure through effects on the quality of both work produced, and transactions with students and colleagues.

Threats to Ontological Security

I wasn't me. The personality just gets wiped out, the person you think of as you. (Maureen)

Ontological security refers to 'confidence in the continuity of personal identity' (Woods and Troman, 2001: 15), and 'a sense of continuity and order in events, including those not directly within the perceptual environment of the individual' Giddens, 1991: 243). Teachers' identities were profoundly damaged by stress, through the experience of shame, losses in levels of autonomy, and losses in professional, gendered and self-identities.

The experience of shame

Shame is an emotion of failure (Troman and Woods, 2001), contributing to biographical disruption (Williams, 2000). For Giddens (1991: 65), shame is a public anxiety state, bearing 'directly on self-identity because it is essentially anxiety about the adequacy of the narrative by means of which the individual sustains a coherent biography'. An existential emotion, shame concerns threats to individual and collective meanings and ideas underlying the quality of existence (Lazarus and Lazarus, 1994).

The stress label was shaming. 'To admit you're suffering from stress is classed as a shame on you' (Margot). 'It's not socially acceptable to have any sort of mental illness' (Celia). The specific terms 'shame', and its partner 'pride', themselves were rare in narratives, supporting Scheff's (1990: 15) hypothesis that shame and pride in modern societies are 'systematically repressed'. The sole comment regarding pride concerned its loss. 'My pride was hit beyond belief. I felt worthless' (Alex). However, shame variant words such as humiliated, mortified, guilty, embarrassed, uncomfortable, insecure, and awkward were more common. Luke felt 'uncomfortable', recalling the destructive coping strategies he adopted in the year prior to his breakdown. Andrew felt 'mortified' and 'humiliated' being called to account in front of the school governing body (see chapter 6). Similarly, Emily felt 'thoroughly humiliated, professionally let down'.

Interviewees felt ashamed of letting down both others' and their own ideals, their 'standards' (Maureen). Alex's mother used to say: "'You'll be a doctor one day". And I was going to be that doctor. I failed myself. I failed my mum, failed my partner. ... Failure was eating me away. I just went under'.

Autonomy

According to Bulan et al (1997: 239), autonomy is of crucial importance to emotional well-being, concerning 'subjective perceptions of who controls the work process, and the extent of identity involvement in it'. Teachers felt unable to influence change processes, feeling like a 'puppet, with somebody else pulling the strings' (Ralph).

Maureen he was

losing control on a day-to-day basis. Control was being taken away from me in an area I considered should have been mine to control. When you feel you've got as little control as that over a situation, you begin to become a very unhappy person. It was creating anxiety and a great sense of guilt.

Conflict over curriculum content and delivery pressures caused tension. Emily for example, experienced increased frustration through implementing departmental lesson plans. 'I had to do exactly what was set out, working to a schedule ... because you're teaching in parallel with others'. She felt that students in her lower ability forms 'would have been better if I could have slowed down ... I was always running over at the ends of lessons. My HoD was telling me to do things in one way *and* telling me to adapt them. I always felt under pressure, harnessed to go at speed, when I felt I needed to go fast/slow/fast/slow'.

Loss of professional identity

I felt I'd completely failed as a teacher. Emotionally I find that very difficult because I see myself as a secondary teacher. That's what my persona is. I had a lot of emotional investment in it. (Celia)

Much educational literature speaks of primary teachers in particular as viewing personal and professional identities as isomorphic. As Nias (1989: 224-5), for example, comments:

The personal and occupational self may be so closely related that, in their own terms, they 'become' teachers: The persons they perceive themselves to be go to work and the teachers they feel they are come home, often to occupy their sleeping as well as their waking hours ... Many teachers, for part or all of their working lives, invest their personal sense of identity in their work

For Celia, Maureen, Terence, Charlotte, Rachel, Gareth, Margot, Stephen, Sally, and Jessica, teacher selves and personal selves were closely intertwined, bound up with vocational commitment, incurring large amounts of emotional investment. 'It was a vocation rather than a job. I don't want to lose my vocation in life ... losing all the tools, all the ways of doing, and it is a breaking down'. As professional identity suffered, vocational commitment changed to professional and/or instrumental commitment (Woods, 1995) (see chapter 7). Ralph for example, advised union members, fellow sufferers from stress-related illness, to stop seeing teaching as a vocation. 'It used to be vocation. Now it's just a job'.

Teachers felt forced into adopting assigned social identities (Ball, 1972), at odds with their preferred self-identity. 'I wasn't being true to myself' (Luke). The donning of a new 'good' teacher mask contributed to emotive dissonance. 'I didn't feel I was teaching the way I wanted to teach. I was being made to go through the *motions* of a 'good' teacher but I didn't *feel* a good teacher any more' (Maureen). Emotive dissonance was fuelled through deteriorating social transactions. 'One or two judgement calls' where Ralph 'behaved unprofessionally, verbally abusing kids' left him feeling 'disgusted, my standards totally compromised'. 'Losing your temper is a sign you're not a "good" teacher' (Celia).

Loss of gendered identity

Stress is seen wrongly as almost a defeat to one's masculinity. (Ralph)

Gendered identities were threatened by the experience of stress (Moynihan, 1998a, 1998b). Both men and women perceived themselves as breaking fundamental cultural 'laws' (Scheff, 1990). Stress was experienced as one of the many ways a man could 'lose face' (Edward), and thus power and status (Kemper, 1978). As Alex explained, 'the job defines a man'. Andrew 'wouldn't have thought [stress] would affect me ... It's not masculine to have emotions, feelings and things ... Big boys don't cry'. Male teachers here thus felt shame in their failure to live up to what they perceived was the 'proper' male role. Cultural taboos hindered emotional awareness (see appendix 1).

Women teachers also felt they had failed to live up to their gendered identity. For Charlotte, working class women should be 'strong ... It's cissy to cry, even more so for a girl around here. You have to be even stronger ... If you're a woman in secondary, you must have balls'. Margot felt shame in not living up to the female role she perceived as hers derived from her northern cultural identity.

It was like shame. I've inherited the idea that a woman should do certain jobs. I was brought up to believe you earned a good day's work. That was so important to my family. You earned your keep. I had, up to that stage, felt I could always hold my head up and say 'I've done no harm to anybody'. But I felt that I'd let so many people down and I'd never catch up This is taboo to my lifestyle, totally taboo.

For the women in this sample nurturing others was a core component of their identity. The 'motherhood mandate' continues to provide a powerful social expectation within gendered social roles (Russo, 1976). As school pressures increased, identity was threatened by feelings of shame surrounding the 'bad mother':

I'm being the most awful mother. When I analysed it, it was appalling. I'd given up a whole year of my life for school. I hadn't once, during the times I'd lain awake all night, ever thought of my own children. Not once! I'd only thought of other people's children. (Margot)

Loss of self-identity

The stress of teaching splits you up so you don't know who you are any more.

(Morag)

Stress was experienced as an assault on the self, 'hurting me deep down' (Andrew). Teachers reported losing familiar selves. 'I didn't feel like myself at all. I couldn't recognise myself' (Rebecca). 'It's almost as though I didn't exist. I couldn't believe that I was the person I was' (Andrew). 'You lose yourself when things are going badly. I lost myself for seven months' (Marcus). Phrases such as 'that's not me', 'that's not him/her', 'changed personality' were common. Margot became 'paranoic', Ralph a 'monomaniac', Charlotte 'a very spoiled child'. Marcus' wife Pauline, recalled him becoming 'enraged, not able to control his temper, wanting to throw these kids out of the windows, smash their faces in. This sort of violence is not like him at all'.

The experience of stress revealed the presence of multiple 'mini-selves' and the emergence of 'shadow selves' (alter egos) (Abrams and Zweig, 1991), parts of selves that were feared and disliked, 'all the bad bits poking through because of stress... a very nasty side to me' (Sally). Luke 'was frightened of being eccentric, anger, rambling and ranting, abstract thoughts, revolutionary ideas' He discovered 'large parts of [himself he] didn't like', their appearance 'a demonstration of me being out of control'.

Teachers thus experienced changes in 'substantial', enduring identities, and in 'situational', transient identities (Ball, 1972), the latter revealing parts of the self that they preferred to keep hidden. As Woods and Jeffrey (2001: 30) argue, teacher identities are in flux, with 'signs of multiple and situational identities that were not there before in the integrated self-identity'. In this way, some teachers' experiences here support post-structuralist accounts of the self, where the self is multifaceted and highly dependent on social situations (Davies and Harré, 1994).

'Hitting the Wall': Emotional Breakdown

Emotional breakdown was characterised by bodily dysfunction, levels of emotional awareness (see chapter 6) so low that this came as a complete surprise. Celia for example, thought she was 'coping fine':

I was doing all the work. The classes were responding without being difficult. They were enjoying the work. Management had observed many lessons, and had been very pleased. Outwardly I was very on top.

However, her body signalled its distress in a staff meeting:

It was as if my colleagues were talking Chinese. I didn't understand a word they were saying. I couldn't stop crying and had to leave. It was like a piece of elastic and it snapped, as instant as that, one minute, 'Isn't everything fine?' The next minute I was in the doctor's. I couldn't stop crying. I got worse and worse. Nothing had happened but I felt desperate. It had come out of nowhere.

Her doctor

took one look and said: 'No, you're not fit to work. It's more than you think. You won't be necessarily going back next week'. I thought: 'Oh, I'll be back next week', so I didn't realise I was ill.

Luke, Ralph, Charlotte, Rachel, Emily, Rebecca, Alex and Stephen also experienced acute panic attacks, Luke's triggered a few hours after his girlfriend refused to renew their relationship.

I was overwhelmed, felt I was going to die. It was the whole emotional release. I was hallucinating. I was a completely different personality. I'd thought I'd got a connection to the Devil. I was uncontrollable, my behaviour completely bizarre. Anyone coming near me, I thought they were putting things under my skin. It was so frightening. The walls are moving, the floor's moving, your whole body. It didn't feel I was me, like there was someone else in my body.

Complete bodily shut down followed a short period of psychosis, incurring six months' absence. Others collapsed in doctors' surgeries. Gareth, for example, as he was talking to the doctor

burst into tears, yet another evidence to me that I'd lost control. I felt I'd lost control at school, and there I had lost control of my emotions, all the emotional stress welling up in me. It all spilled out in an uncontrollable way and emotionally I cracked. I broke. I was weeping.

Andrew's GP recognised Andrew 'couldn't cope. I was falling to pieces. It was a dangerous situation. I was feeling suicidal'.

Teachers suffered huge losses. Gareth for example, felt 'devastated. I thought: "My life is ended"'. For Maureen the stress experience was 'like grief. I equate it with the bereavement process. It's not a personal loss. It's a way of life you've lost' (Maureen). They blamed themselves for failing to cope. They experienced profound changes in the self. Their self-esteem plummeted, and they lost key cognitive and emotional competencies impacting negatively on the quality of their teaching. According to Marris (1993: 149), who draws an analogy between loss and bereavement, 'any serious bereavement impairs the ability to attach meaning to events, and hence to learn from them how to survive'. Through the experience of stress, these teachers lost their ability to attach meaning to daily events and experiences, which impaired their ability to come to terms with their losses, to incorporate change, and to move forward. Organisational factors reduced their 'transformative capacity' (Giddens, 1984), their ability to intervene

in influencing the course of events. Teachers became professionally, emotionally and cognitively de-skilled.

In chapters 4-6, I consider teachers' perceptions of key sources contributing to stress-related illness. I begin in chapter 4 with an exploration of factors within the workplace.

CHAPTER 4. 'EGGSHELL DAYS' IN SCHOOL

Schools are complex, unpredictable social organizations that are extremely vulnerable to a host of powerful internal and external forces. They exist in a vortex of government mandates, social and economic pressures, and conflicting ideologies associated with school administrators, teachers, students and parents. (Blase, 1991: 1)

Schools face increasing dilemmas managing conflicting powerful micro, meso, and macro forces in the aftermath of educational reform. Stokes (1994: 121) argues that, to understand personal experiences of stress, we must place these within the context of the 'increasingly uncertain and sometimes chaotic nature of life in present day organisations ... uncertainty about the future, and a related confusion about the organisation's primary purpose or mission'. Furthermore, much stress emotion arises in response to external and internal pressures, creating dissonance between perceptions of public primary purposes of education, what teachers believe they are doing, what they want to do, and what they feel is actually going on in schools (ibid).

In this chapter, I explore teachers' perceptions of school influences on stress emotions and the onset of stress-related illness. Important themes here were the stress 'cascade', where stress was socially transmitted throughout the organisation, and negative emotional climates, where low levels of individual and organisational emotional competencies contributed to the creation of abusive working conditions. Negative emotional transactions with both colleagues and students intensified emotional labour and emotion work, increasing individual and collective vulnerability to emotional trauma.

The Stress Cascade

Among my sample, stress was experienced individually, at the intrapersonal level, as 'maggots ... gnawing away at me' (Jonathon), 'a decayed rotten feeling. Stress eats like a cancer, this smell of depression, dying, not growing' (Charlotte), and socially, at the interpersonal level, as a 'virus' which 'feeds on itself', where

one person is unhappy, another person is unhappy. It spreads round within the community ... One stressed person is bad enough but when you get half a dozen stressed persons in that organisation, that's worse. That half dozen becomes a dozen. (Maureen)

Stress was experienced as emotionally and socially contagious (Freudenberger and Richelson, 1980; Salovey and Sluyter, 1997). Socially transmitted, it was viewed as possible to 'catch' stress, and to 'infect' others through social transactions as stress cascaded through schools:

- from managers: 'The pressures on Heads are tremendous' (Terence). 'The only reason the Head's behaving like this is because he's under stress (Sally);
- on to teachers: 'One of the causes of my depression is management pressures on me, a transfer of them through me' (Ralph). 'Colleagues tired, all stressed, sparking off each other, two very close inspections' (Rebecca);
- to pupils: 'It filters down through the school to pupils' (Rebecca). 'The way certain colleagues take their stress out on the children, the way they raise their

voice, shout, scream ... creates stress for them which they then take out on other people' (Ralph).

- from pupils: 'very needy' (Celia), 'defensive ... They come with all that baggage' (Charlotte);
- and upwards through teachers towards management and government: 'I let senior staff know why I was under stress. I said: "I need your help. I cannot control these kids and deliver the programme you need me to deliver. The atmosphere is just not conducive to this"' (Gareth). 'Writing to Blunkett, I panicked the Head, frightened the pants off him' (Sally).

The climate of criticism was a main factor in reducing teachers' morale. 'You get criticised, criticised, criticised, bullied, bullied, bullied. You're wrong at all times. So you're constantly under dreadful pressure' (Sally). Self-esteem plummeted as teachers perceived a loss in status in the face of external disparagement and a lack of rewards:

Government constantly criticising teachers in general, criticisms from Inspectorates, Heads and Deputies under pressure from OFSTED, from the Government, passing it on to us. We're all feeling under more pressure than we did. (Andrew)

Rachel felt constant media references to "poor teachers" undermines your morale. In the back of your mind you're saying: "Am I one of them?" - whether you're good or bad, particularly if your self-confidence isn't very good'. Maureen felt

‘one or two lone voices in the wilderness stand up for the teacher. There are not enough pats on the back’.

School Emotional Climates

It’s very sad to work there. People are frazzled. There’s a tenseness, a horridness about it, no happiness apart from a few friends I’ve known for years. There’s nobody trying to make it a staff that gels together. It’s the opposite, how *not* to run any establishment. Nobody should run their business like this. [Our headteacher] just makes people feel uncomfortable working there. (Margot)

Much research indicates the importance of school ethos on teacher emotion (Rutter et al, 1979). One factor common in these teachers’ lives was that they worked in social environments where perceived emotional climates were poor. Teachers talked of ‘a Judas mentality’ (Yvonne, deputy head in Walton Green), ‘repressive regimes’ (Celia), ‘a fascist regime’ (Sally). Staff felt ‘threatened’ (Yvonne). Alex spoke of ‘so much crisis management. People setting up poor systems’. Teachers reported poor leadership and insensitive professional challenge, ‘divisive’ hierarchies with ‘conflict amongst individual senior staff ... We’re not good at feeding back, not good at identifying people’s strengths and skills’ (Yvonne). There was a loss of collegiality. ‘We’re not working together, everybody looking after their own patch’ (Andrew).

Negative emotional climates were characterised by fear, a lack of trust, blame, low respect and chronic anxiety.

Climates of fear

Any ship's only as good as its captain. Most people are scared of him, intimidated by him. (Jonathon)

Caused by 'insufficiencies of power' (Barbalet, 1995: 21), fear is 'an intersubjective experience in which each individual necessarily contributes to the social experience of the fear others also feel' (ibid: 17). Teachers reported 'rule by fear' (Jessica), 'making people ill. They only need a 'little thing' like divorce to crack up because they can't use their job to switch off ... Senior management [are] frightened to death of the Head. The Head's frightened. He's not doing as well as he thinks' (Sally). These teachers feared some of their pupils, 'children approaching 6 feet, built accordingly and haven't got control' (Ralph), 'staff and students, frightened by child bullies' (Sally).

Changes in job security threatened personal security (Milne, 1998). For some of these teachers, the imposition of the National Curriculum led to falling numbers in subject areas (languages, arts, business). One common management strategy was to offset financial deficits through redundancies, temporary contracts, and employing cheaper, NQTs. The threat of redundancy was

frightening. ... For 5 or 6 years I've been trying to keep a department together. That's a strain and stress, the pressure to keep everyone in a job. You're fighting all the time. If students don't choose my subject, I don't have students to teach. That's my job, my livelihood, at risk. (Jonathon)

Fear 'disempowered' (Ralph) teaching communities, reducing opportunities for developing open communication and active problem solving, inhibiting creativity and stress management. Teachers felt 'very insecure, very threatened. You didn't become creative. You didn't become inventive. It stifled that' (Jessica). Post-Ofsted questionnaires were not answered honestly. 'Staff are frightened that if they fill in these questionnaires, they'll be found out. Then Donald [headteacher] will get his teeth into them' (Jessica).

Climates of low trust

People don't trust management. (Andrew)

Trust entails 'confidence in the reliability of a person or system, regarding a given set of outcomes or events, where that confidence expresses a faith in the probity or love of another, or in the correctness of abstract principles' (Giddens, 1990: 34). Trust relations facilitate 'stability, co-operation and cohesion', providing 'the basis for social order' (Troman and Woods, 2001: 13). However, in conditions of 'high modernity', trust relations have broken down with debilitating effects on ontological security and emotion (Giddens, 1990).

Changing trust relationships created stress for teachers through the 'witch-hunt for incompetent teachers' (Sally), Ofsted initiatives, surveillance, monitoring and appraisal, 'identifying failings in everybody ... sitting in classrooms, ticking sheets, no feedback' (Jonathon). Teachers lost trust in colleagues, Jessica for example, always thinking there'd be an ulterior motive'. Distrust inhibited the development of empathy and active support seeking from colleagues:

People hide their difficulties with students, not willing to admit to problems, their own inadequacies, particular issues in school they see as a problem, unwilling to trust someone to help them because they feel it will reflect badly on them. (Jonathon)

Climates of blame

The feeling I have, and others have, it's not just me, there's constant trying to find fault, trying to put blame somewhere, rather than helping. There are a lot of people that do help, but management policy is not one of support. It's one of criticism and blame. (Andrew)

Within dominant discourses contributing to the formation of educational policy, sources of school failure lie predominantly with teacher incompetence (Troman and Woods, 2001). Policies of 'naming, blaming and shaming' (Troman, 1999) led to teachers within 'failing' schools (Sally, Celia) feeling

publicly maligned. We're a bunch of criminals, totally incompetent, that's the attitude. It's: 'Get rid of the naughty old staff who were failing pupils'. I witnessed colleagues being got rid of by the new 'super-head'. No one looks around thinking it's hardly any wonder they can't cope. (Sally)

Climates of blame reduced perceptions of support, senior management viewed as 'out of touch with what goes on in classrooms, forget the type of students that causes problems to individual teachers. It's not individual teachers' fault' (Jonathon). Attention was diverted from addressing organisational and structural issues, displaced

on management and/or individual teachers and students. Teachers here felt they carried blame for poor organisational management strategies. 'Because they can't deal with their problems and responsibility, they think: "Who can we blame? We'll blame the teachers"' (Sally). Schools were perceived as unable to solve societal problems. 'The problems are behavioural problems. We will never raise standards of attainment while behaviour means we can't teach them' (Sally). Alex felt 'staff blame students rather than ways of working'. As Charlotte exclaimed,

How can they blame bloody 12 year olds for troubles at school. It's our fault for making Keith into what he is. We're the next thing to parents. If we haven't sorted him out then how can we blame him?

Climates of low respect

It was personal relationships, a lack of respect. We all deserve respect. I think it was a totally unprofessional way that it was conducted. (Terence)

Teachers here frequently mentioned the lack of social respect afforded teachers, from students, parents, the media, and government, 'constantly being knocked in the press. Every day someone sticks a knife in, the perception of what teachers are, what the job is. [We've] gone down and down in people's estimate' (Edward). Personal relationships with particular colleagues were singled out as defined by a 'lack of any respect, lack of professionalism' (Terence). Restructured management systems were vehicles for implementing educational reforms (Ball, 1994). Some management strategies attracted little respect from their staff:

You listen in the staff-room to a senior teacher talking to a HoD about this teacher, that teacher. It shouldn't happen, creates a bad atmosphere, turns staff off. In our environment many people don't respect senior management. For instance, a meeting last week, a senior teacher not good at timeline jobs, ended the meeting saying he was going to severely take people to task, give them a good telling to if they couldn't meet deadlines, couldn't do this, couldn't do that, real bullying he was. You don't respect them. (Jonathon)

Individual teachers lost self-respect. Edward for example,

was fighting a great wall of apathy, antagonism in school. Discipline was getting worse. I felt I was losing status and self-respect having to send for someone else, who was younger, often less experienced than me, to sort it out. It was weakening my position. I felt in the eyes of many kids I was a laughing stock.

Climates of chronic anxiety

We call them 'eggshell days'. If Patricia's (HoD) angry, she throws things, slams doors, bangs things down, storms around ... You can't speak to her. You don't speak to her, just stay out of the way, try and ignore it, but you know you're going to cop it at the end of the day. (Jessica)

For Giddens (1990: 138), 'the antithesis of trust is a state of mind which could best be summed up as existential angst and dread'. Frequent emotional confrontations with

colleagues and students filled working lives with chronic anxiety, created partly by numerous demands on middle managers:

At the back of a lot of my angst, kids interrupting lessons ... Other people couldn't cope with their own classes. That created stress for me. I spent too much time solving other people's problems, not concentrating on my own.

(Ralph)

Teachers felt 'dread going in the staff room ... You're only going to get picked up for some paper you haven't filled in' (Charlotte). Ralph felt 'lucky' to get

beyond the staff room door. Somebody would give me a piece of paper, or 'Guess what one of yours did yesterday?' as if they were actually mine, personal offspring. I'd be answering kids' questions at the door. So I would never rest.

Bullying techniques were common management tools, viewed as ineffective tactics for persuasion. 'It creates anxiety and negativity. It's poor man management' (Jonathon).

Negative emotional climates were perceived as directly influencing the onset of stress-related illness and burnout. 'I'd become very introspective. I think it was just this dread, almost building one's mental inner self defence for the battle. That was what affected my blood pressure' (Gareth).

Emotional climates set the emotional tone of the organisation, inspiring either high levels of emotional competencies which provide a source of confidence and mutual respect, or low levels of emotional competencies which result in fear, anxiety, a loss of self respect and social respect (Smith, 1992). A recursive vicious cycle developed where stressors created negative emotional climates, which in turn created more stress through low emotional competencies and abusive working practices and conditions reinforcing negative emotional climates.

School Emotional Competencies

Teachers here attested to low levels of individual and organisational emotional literacy within their schools (Goleman, 1995). Of most importance were the social emotional competencies - managing change, communication, and conflict management (Goleman, 1998).

Managing change

According to Fullan (1997: 33), 'productive educational change roams somewhere between over-control and chaos'. Traversing new horizons successfully requires management highly skilled in change initiation and change management (Goleman, 1998). Teachers here felt schools were low in skills in managing change.

Much teacher stress was perceived as originating in troubled school mergers (Sally, Jessica, Luke, Maureen, Edward, Gareth, Charlotte, and Ralph). 'The stress goes all the way back to the creation of the school' (Ralph). 'Everybody was up for grabs, didn't know if they were going to keep their job. Everybody was stressed. It wasn't

just me, the whole school' (Maureen). School mergers have been one of the most radical externally imposed innovations schools have faced in the wake of educational reform, re-organisation holding huge costs in teacher and student stress, and in school effectiveness (Draper, 1992; Kyriacou and Harriman, 1993; McHugh and Kyle, 1993). Individuals and groups with similar new visions, cultural beliefs and values may interact synergistically, creating a new corporate identity (Wallace, 1996). However, when there are incompatible, even antagonistic, work cultures, with dissonance between pre-merger cultures and post-merger unification, the workplace becomes the site of emotional distress (ibid).

According to Maureen, Edward, Gareth, Charlotte, and Ralph, the merging of Woodend boys school and Garthfell girls school to form Castlerigg Comprehensive illustrates how the power of the new leadership to develop a new corporate identity can be limited by the dialectic of control between change agents: between the head teacher, the senior management team, classroom teachers and students. A stressed, polarised community of teachers holding differing educational philosophies and adhering to differing styles of teaching, with too many dissatisfied, demoted staff previously holding promoted posts in former schools, resisted change, non-accommodation, 'the seedbed of stress and burnout' (Woods, 1995: 6), a common response to change. Powerful, influential subcultures emerged, where associated identity remained within the pre-merger period, undermining the formation of new cultural allegiances, impacting negatively on student achievement.

In Edward's department an oppositional subculture developed, feeding back into the destabilisation of the school, increasing levels of stress. '[We] failed to accept the new regime'. A middle-aged group, with 'poor results and some poor teaching', they

felt 'under attack, identified as not succeeding, and vulnerable'. Gareth, joining the department in the third year post-amalgamation, corroborated Edward's account, observing 'severe historical problems', 'low morale', 'a lousy department' with 'poor materials, poor motivation, poor teaching and poor discipline. It was dog eat dog, a recipe for disaster'.

Edward perceived skills in collective and individual change management largely absent. 'The school should have realised the amalgamation was going to be stressful. Among the four Deputy Heads somebody could have been given responsibility to oversee and identify things causing trouble'. However, there was no proactive formal organisational stress management, nor time or resources given to collective or individual grieving.

Individual teachers in this sample received no training in change management. Teachers responsible for managing change found colleagues highly resistant to more change without rewards. Alex, for example, employed 'to bring in new approaches' to Walton Green, had 'a vision' of 'more active learning ... to alter thought processes, then techniques'. However, teachers were 'frightened of change, had to invest so many times, and not collected'. Delegation was difficult. 'They're locked into the idea: *You* get paid for it, *you* do the work'. Poor human resource management resulted in the emergence of divergent hostile subcultures where the dynamics between reformers and resisters erected social barriers, impacting negatively on emotional climates.

Participative decision-making

The degree of involvement in decision-making is a key factor influencing well-being in the workplace. Teachers felt unable to influence the change process, experiencing a loss of ownership, autonomy and power. 'We're at a watershed where external things have taken over the running of the school' (Jonathon). 'Schools [are] no longer the driving force, the vehicle. The driving force was local or central government' (Terence). 'We used to get involved in writing development plans. We've lost ownership. That's a downwards stressing, a depressing feeling' (Jonathon).

According to these teachers, change was managed through autocratic leadership, with new work cultures imposed, not evolving with their input. Within Walton Green, they reported 'downright dictatorship' (Alex), 'the modern breed of Head! democratic dictatorship'. Autocratic style ultimately makes the decisions. Because of the structures within the school, you find it very difficult to influence decisions' (Jonathon). Teachers described poor consultation and ineffective problem-solving. 'The problem is the system, too laissez-faire, not challenging, upper management not grappling with issues that need grappling with' (Alex). Much contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994) was reported:

It's: 'Let's have a brainstorming session', then in half an hour, you're told what to do. That frustrates me. I expect even-handedness. I was supposed to be contributing in creating the process, but I'm wasting my time because they've already made their decision. (Alex)

The introduction of the National Curriculum impacted negatively on those whose subjects were deemed outside its remit. Jonathon for example, found it 'very difficult to influence decisions and things that are going on, being in a marginal subject outside the curriculum'. For Charlotte 'teaching drama didn't give me much authority to say anything. It's only a 'doss' subject. What do you know about anything? I've got no voice'.

Managing conflict

Managing conflict involves analysing, understanding and solving problems in relationships, team working, co-operating, negotiating and resolving disagreements (Klein 1997). Teachers here felt the real problem within schools was not 'incompetent teachers' but a 'lack of skills in human relations' (Alex). According to Bolger et al (1989), the most upsetting daily hassles involve interpersonal confrontations. Teachers were 'at loggerheads' (Jessica). 'What I don't like about teaching is the aggro within the staff' (Margot). Poor conflict management was

frightening to watch. In other business environments, things like that do happen, but they're more manageable. In our job there's not a lot of personnel management. People haven't been trained, poor man management skills. (Jonathon)

One key issue emerging in Castlerigg during the change process was 'conflict between schools of teaching' (Ralph). There was no open discussion or professional development available for those who had no experience of teaching both sexes. The new regime proved challenging for those with limited skills in handling students of

both sexes. Maureen 'tried really hard with the boys' but 'the discipline aspect just got harder and harder'. Ralph reported struggling with a new line manager from the girls' school, 'a middle-aged spinster, never had any children, hadn't the faintest idea how to handle teenage boys'. According to Draper (1992: 371), during the 'liminal' phase of school mergers, some male teachers and boys try to establish 'traditional gender codes of dominance' over other staff and students. Teachers from the girl's school saw their teaching styles disappear as the teaching style used in the boys' school became dominant.

We had to bark at students, shout at them, be aggressive in our attitudes, raise your voice, yell down the corridors. I couldn't do that. It was completely alien to me. That was at the core of my really deep unhappiness.

(Maureen)

Students also demanded different teaching styles. Girls 'resented the strictness and rigidity' (Edward). Charlotte 'made the girls cry. I was too aggressive'. The boys demanded a confrontational style, viewing Edward's approach as 'soft'. A small man, Edward felt

size has something to do with it. It added to their lack of acceptance of me. Teenagers see maleness as being brash and macho and extrovert, exuding confidence ... I didn't do it very well. Therefore I lost face in their eyes. I represent something that doesn't fit what they think is ideal, who was fair game for anything they cared to throw. This was the cause of the stress I couldn't get round. Having to stereotype myself was against my personality. That was a conflict.

The demand to change teaching styles countered deeply held beliefs and values. Teacher identity was threatened by increased feelings of failure. As these teachers found their style of teaching no longer fitted the 'good teacher' model (Troman, 1996), their professional identity was 'spoiled' (Maureen). As a result they experienced 'spoiled careers' (Woods, 1995).

Communication systems

Communication involves 'being able to talk about feelings effectively; being a good listener and being able to ask appropriate questions' (Klein 1997). Good communication systems are vital to the creation of positive learning communities, since enabling dialogue stimulates learning, creative and critical thinking and community, and enhances levels of emotional literacy (Values Education Council, 2000).

Teachers here described schools possessing poor communication systems, individual teachers 'poor communicators' with colleagues (Jonathon), senior management teams having less contact with chalk-face staff. 'The head, we never see him' (Alex). Management, unable to deal with interpersonal conflict, avoided direct communication. 'Death by Memo', a main form of bullying management communication style (NASUWT, 1996), contributed to negative emotional climates.

Jessica described the fear surrounding the 'brown envelope in the pigeon-hole', the impersonal, critical memo often containing threats to the teacher self, negative comments about teaching skills, possible official and unofficial proceedings, additional responsibilities:

There's a thing in national schooling. If you get a brown envelope, that is it! Your heart sinks into your boots. You start shaking. You wonder what the hell's in it. Your whole world just collapses. You have to go into the loo to open it, your knees shaking, your head in the bowl. If you breathe in the wrong place, you get a brown envelope. It's like victimisation. That's how we feel in the place ... I never got a negative brown envelope. They still had the same effect on me as on others. Whenever Donald was gunning for another member of staff, you always felt 'there but for the grace of God go I – who's next?' Donald would say because my brown envelopes always contained good news, that was positive, but to me it wasn't. The only thing I got was sheer relief it wasn't a negative one! There was no joy in the fact that it was a positive one!

Extensive balkanisation of departments and competition in the marketplace reduced communication (Hargreaves, 1994). The learning community had contracted:

In the last 4 or 5 years, there's been a reduction in the amount people communicate across departments, across schools, a lot of discommunication. The competitive structure creates more stress because you're competing with George down the road whom you used to chat to, discuss ideas with. It's become 'we don't want to talk to them because they're going to steal our students'. (Jonathon)

Within Walton Green, for example, Jonathon believed communication had 'broken down. Divide and conquer, dividing departments, dividing staff'. Fear led to closed cultures, 'too much secrecy' (Andrew), 'a lot of whispering behind closed doors, part

of the fear thing ... It's their job on the line. Are they going to go in redundancy? How do they choose that person? Is it going to be me?' (Jonathon). 'Everybody stopped talking, just closed down' (Alex). Fear and lack of trust hindered support seeking. 'Very few people keep confidences in our job. It's not part of their nature. They're not good at it. However sympathetic most people are, if they're anywhere near the top, it's going to go back to someone else' (Jonathon). There was no arena for safe disclosure, discussion of school issues, or talking about feelings. 'Some people are really quite unhappy on decisions being made. What we haven't really developed well is the ability for them to just say that, a forum' (Yvonne, deputy Head). 'If you made a comment in a staff meeting, you'd be asked to go outside and discuss it with Donald. People are not prepared to express their views at all' (Jessica). Active problem analysis and problem solving was undermined. 'You've got to be willing to admit that things are going wrong or there are problems, otherwise you'll never get them solved, but we live in a culture where so many people want to close the doors and hide things away because they're frightened' (Jonathon). There was little attempt to employ emotional knowledge to further understanding and analysis of emotional communications.

In this sample, teachers viewed poor school emotional climates as not conducive to receiving, acknowledging and pursuing emotion communications. Schools were perceived as not good at asking appropriate questions or listening to staff. 'You were crying into the wind. You were trying to point things out to people, and they just weren't listening' (Maureen). Teachers perceived an emphasis on emotion regulation and repression hindered the development of emotional intelligence, constructive criticism, emotional awareness and empathy, locking schools into rigid closed

systems. 'The emphasis here is on doing it right, rather than doing the right thing' (Alex).

Emotional Transactions with Colleagues

Schools are emotional arenas, where the 'management and mobilisation of emotions are pivotal to the ways organizational order is achieved and undone' (Fineman, 1993: 1). Teachers perceived much negative emotion was created through the ways in which educational reform was implemented. School management was viewed as unable to provide a secure 'holding environment' (Stapley, 1996) for the voice of teacher emotion that emerged in challenging situations resulting in disruptive relationships with colleagues.

Key themes for my teachers were managing resistance, managing negative affect, and providing support.

Managing resistance

Not all teachers struggled against educational reform, significant numbers finding specific initiatives attractive (Fullan, 1997b). However, it appears that such 'passionate teachers' can become rapidly exhausted through managing the apathy and resistance they encounter amongst colleagues (Fried, 1995). The emotional costs of introducing educational change to colleagues were high for some of my teachers, who experienced emotional turbulence not only due to managing their own emotional distress but also the emotional distress of others.

Luke, Alex, Jonathon and Stephen were initially enthusiastic reformers, seeing 'a very positive side of it' (Luke). However, managing the 'unease and unrest at school' (Luke), proved emotionally destabilising. Teachers experienced emotional abuse from colleagues. Luke, for example, responsible for introducing the National Curriculum Mathematics pilot, spoke of problems in being 'the focus of imposition' of educational reform on colleagues:

It was very hard to sell it to others in the faculty, who felt a sense of injustice at why had they got to start this. ... We had to report back to other faculties, what we'd done, how it all worked, which didn't work at all because suddenly you got antagonism from colleagues as though *you* were telling them they had to do this ... They're thinking it's not government any more, it's *you* telling them to do this.

Jonathon, trying to 'encourage everybody to take ownership of GNVQ', perceived himself in a 'no-win situation', his coordinating role 'the middle management kicking school ... no real authority, no management structure to support'. Without management training, staff 'wobbles ... created anxieties'. Diffusing emotional encounters lowered feelings of confidence and competence:

There's a lot of temperamental people ... When a member of staff came shouting at me because of his own anxiety, I'd no authority to placate him, say anything, except: 'I don't make the rules. This is what's going to happen. I'm sorry. I'm just the messenger. Don't shoot me'.

Alex, attempting change too fast, quickly antagonised colleagues:

Coming in with both barrels blazing, I've offended people. Put my foot in it so many times. People are challenging me, trying to put me down. This is my problem with the human relations side. I can't personally deal with other people's negativity, can't change one department to another with no resources. There's too few people like me wanting active open learning and developing self-esteem, too many others who have withdrawing coping strategies that aren't good for everyone else.

Managing their own resistance held further emotional costs. Jonathon, for example, no longer 'fully believe[s] in the structure, the making of GNVQ. I wasn't happy with the product I was selling. It created a lot of internal strife'. Within a short time, Luke found new mandates 'unwieldy', criteria based target setting, prescribed ways of working and a 'tick box mentality', not sitting well with his own values. 'It doesn't suit how my mind works. I don't think like that. I don't think you can expect children to think like that. I've never understood something has to be done by this age, and that age'.

At a time when teachers were managing both their own and others' conflicts and needed support, they were shunned by colleagues. Luke, for example, 'got a lot of flack ... Being isolated was difficult to cope with. I didn't feel valued in terms of the job I was doing because everybody else didn't want to be involved in it. I didn't feel valued culturally as a teacher'. It became difficult to pursue 'any sort of personal relationship with staff' (Jonathon).

Situational factors thus increased feelings of depersonalisation and the loss of school support networks. Through lack of skills in people management, they unwittingly

alienated colleagues, increasing tensions, reducing the 'numbers of teachers committed to reform' (Fullan, 1997b). These teachers became 'balkanised' reformers who rapidly experienced burnout. 'By the end of the first year, I was burnt out' (Jonathon).

Managing negative affect

Within any organisation, leaders actively manage feelings (Fineman, 1993). One of the unspoken emotion rules within these schools was 'Don't bring negative emotion into open forum'. These teachers however, openly communicated their perceptions of collective concerns within their schools, exposing 'cracks in the system' (Celia), 'conspiracies of silence' (Jonathon), and bringing the problems of stress, 'crisis-management' (Alex, Charlotte), and 'cultures of indiscipline' (Sally) into open forum. In so doing, they became 'bullet-carriers' for organisational anxieties. This was reported as deeply troubling management. With no forum for the legitimate expression of their concerns, teacher emotion was perceived here neither as a social signal to a stressed institution, nor as efforts to deal with loss and recover meaning. Teachers felt management were poor at dealing with criticisms, often interpreted as personal attacks. 'Many heads feel their authority is being eroded' (Celia). The expression of apparently unregulated emotion was interpreted as destructive, perceived as threatening the power of the leadership, countering managerial purposes.

Teachers perceived schools as managing emotion through 'abnormalisation' (Goffman, 1961), negative emotion neutralised through deviance labelling techniques (Turner, 1987). They were labelled 'dinosaurs'. Isolated as 'a threat' (Emily), 'a whistle blower' (Jonathon), 'troublemakers' (Celia), 'a bunch of militants' (Sally),

'mavericks' (Celia, Alex, Sally, Emily), these teachers were viewed as 'part of the problem, not a solution to the problems' (Gareth). 'People like me they hate. The shutters go down' (Sally).

'Discount the emotions of others' was another emotion rule. Within Walton Green, Margot's deputy head Yvonne claimed Margot was 'highly strung, you know', implying her emotion signalled an individualised personality trait, rather than an emotional signal of organisational anxieties. Jonathon regretted showing 'strong emotions' in Walton Green. 'People say: "Oh, he's at it again"'. In this way, the label 'being emotional' was used to individualise and discount individual and thus organisational emotion. Displays of emotion deemed 'inappropriate', and the failure to adopt appropriate feelings, were looked on as individual failings. Teachers here were expected not only to curtail emotional displays but also to adopt 'appropriate' feelings. This involved both 'surface' and 'deep' acting (Hochschild, 1983). However, emotion rules dictating appropriate emotional expression were contested. Charlotte for example declared, 'Criticise my work, but don't criticise me. Tell me how to go on, how to do the job, but don't tell me how I've got to feel about it'.

Teachers here coped with 'frustrations' and 'fears of repercussions' (Maureen) by suppressing emotion, donning an emotional mask (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). Hope, a constructive force overcoming challenges and setbacks (Fullan, 1997b) vanished. Charlotte for example, 'lost hope ... I couldn't be angry and fight a war. What's the point of being a survivor when everybody else is in the water?' In suppressing teacher emotion, teachers here felt schools lost a valuable signalling system, with vital information shedding light on school effectiveness.

Providing support

Providing emotional support to stressed colleagues used emotional capital (Williams, 1998). Much research has concentrated on positive influences of social support systems. Conceptual frameworks rarely explore how membership of social support systems contains both positive and negative dimensions. Providing social support can be very demanding, increasing vulnerability to stress related illness (Tilden and Gaylen, 1987). 'My mate, a brilliant musician, [was] teaching in the hall ... He cracked. He was crying. Quickly I walked him out, tried not to let the kids see him' (Sally). Managers, unskilled in appraisal, monitoring and mentoring caused 'a great deal of grief' (Margot), which needed managing:

If you've someone not good at it, doesn't know how to do it, she can do more harm than good. Brenda is not trained to understand people's needs. She'd do more criticism, wouldn't know how to praise a teacher. It wouldn't occur to her that young teachers need lots of encouragement. Last year, I watched young people not given the right guidelines, and collapse on me. I watched young teachers literally tear our department to pieces, the stress from them part of my stress load, coming to me saying: 'Please will you do something about it. She's got to be stopped'. (Margot)

Margot became 'pig in the middle, the senior. I had to go explain the problems to management'.

Emotional support within this sample was gendered, the primary burden falling on female teachers, who became recipients for organisational concerns, as Ralph

explained. 'I still don't think there is enough of a situation whereby male staff are able to talk to males. It's still perceived as a sign of weakness ... I tend to go to one of my female colleagues'. Jessica became 'the go-between between staff and Patricia. So I got their burdens as well. I spent quite a bit of time on the telephone at home. Counselling is perhaps too strong a word but you're listening to them, taking on board their worries'. Caring for colleagues caused much 'frustration':

It was just going on and on and on. It gets depressing because you see it all as a vicious circle. It doesn't matter what we do. We can't stop it. You've got to moan to somebody else to get it off your chest so you don't feel quite as burdened but I didn't know what to do for these people. I didn't know how to help them because I was in the same situation myself. I eventually started saying: 'You must go to Georgia'. I actually *took* them to Georgia.

(Jessica)

Emotional capital was thus depleted through using emotional 'energies in school with others who were crying on each other's shoulders' (Frank, Jessica's husband).

Abusive Working Relationships

I was victimised. You can see me as a sacrificial lamb. (Sally)

According to Thornton (2000), more than one third of teachers report being victimised by colleagues or management. The emotional politics of 'cascade bullying' (Field, 1998; Woods and Troman, 2001) contributed to fear, chronic anxiety and the loss of confidence and creativity. Much research indicates growing numbers

of 'overworked bullies, who suffer from stress, can't cope ... take their anger and frustration out on the people they work with' (C. Cooper, cited in Milne, 1998). The term 'bullying' however tends to individualise behaviour which might be seen in an organisational context as resulting from conflicting organisational purposes and goals (Fineman, 1993). What these teachers described is more characteristic of 'work abuse' (Wyatt and Hare, 1997). (Wyatt and Hare, 1997: 9) identify four types of work abuse:

- acute scapegoating, where 'a person is ejected from the workplace because his or her behaviour patterns do not match the norms of the work group or organization';
- chronic scapegoating, where 'a person is chosen to receive the negative feelings people feel about where they work';
- ongoing (neglectful) abuse where 'people's basic need to get the job done are ignored and they are blamed if they express their needs' (see above, and chapter 6);
- denial of due process, where 'the organization denies primary levels of abuse and prevents just resolution of conflicts' (see chapter 6).

Important themes for my teachers were scapegoating, and abusive strategies.

Scapegoating

Teachers here experienced elements of both acute and chronic scapegoating. Sally, Terence, Celia, Edward, and Emily, felt a lack of 'fit' with new educational regimes. 'It was well known I didn't fit' (Celia).

Like others in this sample, one of the emotion rules within Sally's school was 'Don't expose failings in discipline policies'. Sally's appraisal documentation reveals excellent classroom management skills, and praise for 'good rapport with students; calm atmosphere, no opportunity for disruptive behaviour to mar the start of the lesson, despite potentially difficult students', 'successful management of students', 'trust between students and teacher', 'positive learning experience in a difficult subject'. She was singled out as a key staff member to advise other staff on classroom management. However, she reported her Head's behaviour towards her changing after she openly discussed perceived inadequacies in discipline policies in a school staff meeting, requesting their addition to the official agenda, and wrote a letter to the Minister for Education. She found herself targeted, 'another threat, having to defend myself regularly', subject to acute scapegoating:

He kept zooming into my lessons, several occasions during that week, telling me off in front of the children. I knew what he was doing. Trying to catch me out, but they were good lessons, marvellous.

She spoke of him choosing to observe her

'Achilles heel', unannounced, last period of the day, the most difficult class, renowned for disruptive behaviour. They come in high from their previous lesson where they're really bad, virtually impossible to settle down. It's hell. ... I thought: 'Oh, my God, he's going to start on me! It's making me ill, more vulnerable, pains in my chest, neck, arms. If I put up with much more, I'm going to flip. I've got to leave'. When they start that game, that's it.

Terence, a deputy head in a city comprehensive, no longer blended with the new management culture, finding

the way the senior management team developed very frustrating, the Head, 3 Deputies and 2 Senior Teachers all in the same mould. I was the odd one out in philosophy and management of education, the only member of the team that wasn't a member of the same political party, the same union. Oldest by about 10 years, I was an evolutionary. I wasn't set, didn't want things to stay as they were. The others were revolutionary, scrap and build. I didn't think where they were going was the right place. The Head and I did not agree on lots of things. The atmosphere changed, became nasty.

A common management strategy was to replace 'the old guard' (Jessica), with those more amenable to new regimes of power, rather than provide training enhancing emotional skills. In Castlerigg, several staff left soon after the merger. Edward, advised to take early retirement, resisted, wanting 'to be in control. I would not be pushed out. Although I hated it, I'd still go when I decided'. 'Outplacement', exiting people through helping them acquire alternative employment (Rogers, 1999) was absent. There was no forum for discussing moving on in a positive way without 'losing face', and little organisational awareness of the emotional consequences of removing people. 'The Head feels she has to be ruthless, cut out the deadwood, but we're people! We're not bloody bits of deadwood!' (Charlotte).

Teachers described situations where annually one or two members of staff were singled out for abuse, school managers projecting their fears onto others. 'The person who's being targeted at the moment is the union representative' (Jessica). Andrew felt

targeted in the year he showed vulnerability due to home circumstances (see chapters 5 and 6). Andrew and his wife Sarah described how, in a previous years, the same deputy head had targeted other colleagues. Sarah likened the 'psychological pressures' used by management to 'an SS officer having sadistic vent on somebody, just pursuing it all the time, trying to eat away at his psyche'. Andrew felt 'in constant trepidation' of potential interactions with his deputy head. 'It felt like being in the same room as a big hairy spider'.

Jessica experienced cascade bullying, her Head Donald targeting Patricia, her HoD:

Once Donald gets his teeth into you, it's brown envelopes for everything. Patricia was getting brown envelopes every day ... Donald was bullying and blackmailing her but she was doing the same to other members of staff. She couldn't see the relationship between her behaviour and his behaviour.

Her colleagues developed 'code signals. If we said to each other: "It's an eggshell day", we would literally do anything to stay away from her, so we didn't have to come into contact with her at all'.

Acute and chronic scapegoating created fear. 'School's not a happy place. Donald has a reputation, certainly within the school, possibly the county, of having his teeth into somebody all the time ... a number of members of staff feel hounded out of their jobs' (Jessica).

Teachers here found it difficult to describe and analyse the abusive behaviours they experienced. As Jessica's husband, Frank, explained, 'taken point by point, all you're often left with is the silly little bitching type of things that you can actually pick on because Patricia's very clever at it'. However, teachers perceived changes in working conditions as a main strategy used to create social order where middle and upper management were 'the main driving force' (Terence). Social order was sought through criticism of classroom management where teachers found themselves being negatively re-assessed (see above and chapter 6), and through:

- humiliation (See chapter 6)

Patricia 'hauled [Jessica] out in front of a class and gave [her] a good telling off ... at departmental meetings, you're told off in front of colleagues'. In meetings, Terence was 'spoken down, told "No, no, no". Rather than saying exactly how I felt, I shut up, not prepared to pursue it because it just wasn't worth it because it was going to be criticised or condemned'.

- the removal of successful arenas

Loss of upper school work left Terence feeling 'grieved', the further loss of timetabling and control within curriculum and pastoral elements, 'a considerable disappointment but there was nothing I could do about it'. Residentials were one of Jessica's positive emotional experiences, which her HoD prohibited her continuing. 'I loved taking them out, got a tremendous amount out of seeing the kids develop. Their

sense of achievement was my sense of achievement'. 'I *loved* having sixth-formers as students, one of my saving graces ... It was another nail in my coffin' (Maureen).

- responsibilities overload

With a 60% teaching load, Terence for example, found himself 'the only person available' for staffing and absence cover. Furthermore, he felt his administration load 'unrealistic':

Examinations Secretary ... responsible for the building and maintenance, to go round every area of the school, into every room of the school, the external part of the school, all corridors, every week, reporting on every room to see what needs to be done maintenance-wise ... I said: 'This is ridiculous. I'm the Deputy Head, not the caretaker. This is not my responsibility'.

- isolation

Terence again well illustrates this. His Head rarely spoke to him, stopped inviting him to SMT meetings, and changed the school layout. 'I was moved away from the administration area to an area that was created by the dining hall, one of the worse places to work'.

- surveillance

Patricia was always in your room ... to keep an eye on us, check what we were teaching, check kids weren't misbehaving, check we weren't undermining anyone's authority You didn't dare speak to the technician, because you'd get told off. You felt as though you couldn't have a relationship with a member of staff. (Jessica)

Terence perceived

people checking up on me, the school secretary timing my movements - what time I arrived in the car park, what time I got to my room, what time I left in evenings, phone calls to see if I was in my office. I realised I could look out of my door and see her. When I lifted up the phone, I could see her putting down.

Abusive working relationships fuelled anxiety, as management strategies were perceived as increasing negative emotion and emotional labour, undermining confidence, and levels of competency. Anticipatory 'angst' developed through 'ongoing' social situations (Parkinson, 1995), where emotional distress is carried through a series of social interactions colouring actual and anticipated future transactions. Maureen's account well illustrates this.

Maureen taught art in a large open plan building especially designed so students could carry out a large variety of work in several working areas, clearly seen from the main teaching areas through glass dividers. She described how, in an emotional

confrontation with her Head, both power and status (Kemper, 1978) were challenged in front of students.

The Head interrupted a GCSE lesson, 'all set up to do practical work, all geared up, all enthusiastic, all excited, getting on with it wonderfully'. Maureen, on the other side of the glass to the rest of her students, was assisting one student working with boiling wax:

I was upholding my responsibilities to students, that they didn't get covered in hot wax. The Head just *ordered*, and I have to underline that word because that's the way it came across, she *ordered* the student and I back into the teaching space. She couldn't understand the concept of the way the design of the block had been organised. Her very words: 'You've left your students. I don't want parents thinking you've left your students'. The head was challenging me openly in front of students. I tried to act very professionally. She was more concerned about how things looked when visitors came round. It had got to look right even if it wasn't right.

Maureen tried to explain the reasons why she was temporarily on the other side of the glass partition. She received support from her students, who 'knew exactly what it was about. One lad said to me later, "Never mind, Mrs McNeill, we must be seen to be doing the right thing to get bottoms on seats, mustn't we?"' She perceived her Head becoming 'bolshie. It became difficult for her to get out of the situation, apart from just going. She had lost face. The kids were taking sides. That was her fear, what they might think, and fear of what parents would think'. Maureen felt her Head compromised her professionalism.

I felt the definite loser. I was absolutely devastated because she'd wiped away any authority I had, telling me what to do, how to do it, and she wasn't listening to my reasons for taking the action I'd taken.

Maureen then explained how this affected future transactions:

If that's happened to you once, it could happen again. You didn't know when ... I wasn't sure whether she was going to make life very difficult for me and it would end up with me losing my job ... Every time I saw her I wondered whether she was coming to see me, whether I was going to have a repeat of this scenario It *feels* like surveillance, because she did come down to the block on quite a few occasions, very soon after that.

Anxiety regarding the anticipation of possible negative transactions displaced energy from the practice of teaching, displacing it towards use for planning and anticipation. Ongoing relational situations hindered emotion management, past encounters influencing present encounters and future encounters. As Maureen explained, 'That's a time robber. It robs you of the future, your mind always racing ahead, thinking what might happen':

It made me jumpy. Made me think about how I'd reacted that time, how I might react in future. Planning was constrained ... It led to a gradual loss of confidence, in my ability to cope in these situations, a general lack of happiness, exhausted at the end of the day, fearful of what the next day might bring, pretty joyless.

Such negative transactions took energy from the act of teaching, displacing it towards planning and anticipating future transactions. Teachers felt powerless to stop such transactions. They also experienced abuse during emotional transactions with students.

Emotional Transactions with Students

It's a very emotional job. You're so concerned with children's welfare.

(Rebecca)

Many comprehensive schools with 'a disproportionate number of pupils whose difficult lives make them difficult to teach' (Owl, 1999), face problems managing children whose 'emotional instability and poor attainment make it difficult to reintegrate them' (Farrell, 1998). The Mental Health Foundation, reporting growing concern regarding widespread psychological and psychiatric problems amongst pupils, with 1 in 5 young people suffering from disorders such as anxiety, depression and psychosis, warns that 'the nation's children, the country's most important resource, are failing to thrive emotionally' (Bunting, 1999). Endemic disadvantages consign disaffected students to the margins of society and social exclusion, their families often unable to provide 'adequate physical, emotional and social nurture or protection from harm' (Hoghughi, 1999).

Teachers in my sample perceived schools as not only filled with stressed teachers but also with stressed, 'challenging' students. Themes of importance here included managing stressed students, managing 'challenging' students, managing aggression and managing abuse.

Schools have, for many children, come to represent a sanctuary from the world outside, the only place where they are valued, listened to and made to feel significant. (Lord Puttman, 2000: 1)

There is increasing concern about levels of stress in children and adolescents often ascribed to the consequences of the post-modern world (Robson et al, 1995). Teachers felt many of their students experienced 'stress within their home lives, so that when they get to school it's the last thing. Not just more broken homes, more homes where there is tension. They come to school in order to escape the trauma of being at home' (Gareth).

Teachers viewed the stressors children faced as seriously affecting emotional and cognitive skills. Some pupils were less mature, have less experience, less knowledge' (Rebecca), and 'demoralised angry underneath as well that they have not been given a better education having felt school had let them down' (Gareth's wife, Marjorie). They had 'low levels of self-awareness, lack of confidence and really low self-esteem' (Celia), 'no boundaries because they haven't worked any out for themselves' (Charlotte), and 'low levels of self-control' (Jonathon). They 'don't go with any rules' (Marcus). They 'couldn't behave, couldn't sit still ... shout out for your attention, make very loud verbal comments attention-seeking, throwing tantrums, wrecking instruments' (Celia). Motivation was impaired. 'I know it's part of *my* job to keep them interested but there's a limited amount teachers can do. There's got to be some interest coming from the other end' (Maureen).

League tables and the pressures of the marketplace increased stressors on students and teachers through 'pressures to perform' (Gareth) leading to a 'naming and shaming' culture for pupils, 'a witch-hunt on the GCSE C/D grades. We've got to name them and shame them, try to get them to be C's. I feel so sorry for the kids' (Jonathon). Rachel saw 'so many youngsters in a mad panic'. This increased the emotion work for teachers. 'You need someone there who can calm them down' (Rachel).

Many serious pressures facing GCSE pupils are created and sustained by schools themselves (Harris, 1997). As Ralph asked, 'Do they create the stress, or do we create stress for them? It must induce some form of stress in them. Which in turn induces stress in us'. Terence felt

society has put a very difficult burden upon them. Unless they get good GCSE grades, they're a failure. They've transposed that into: 'Unless you've got an A, B, or C, you're a failure'. What we're not recognising is if they'd got a Grade 1 or 2 CSE that was good for those kids. It's in all the papers - how many got five or more As to Cs. It's just solidifying it. This whole culture is wrong. There are some people in this world not destined to be high academic flyers.

This culture permeated schools, increasing pupil's fears of failure. The National Curriculum reduced the variety of learning styles on offer, forcing teachers and children into particular ways of working, 'not all pupils learn in the same ways' (Jonathon). Pupils were 'not happy forced to go to this trough, but you can't make the bloody horse drink' (Charlotte). Jonathon felt students, forced into 'alien

academic structures', were 'turned off education, the trouble being we're on that treadmill. A lot of them get switched off too quickly kids voting with their feet 20% absenteeism which is frightening'.

New educational regimes were thus profoundly stressful for these teachers, and for their students. This stress was then socially transmitted around the school organisation through the stress cascade.

Managing challenging students

There is much pressure to keep aggressive, violent and disruptive children in mainstream classrooms (Slater, 1999). Educational reform resulted in changes in school policies regarding the inclusion of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD). While the current government is committed to providing full-time education for all excluded students and to reducing truancy levels by one third by 2002 (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998), there seems to be little practical support to providing opportunities for such 'demonised' and 'pathologised' students (Parsons, 1998). Deterioration in the quality of classroom interactions with challenging students was a major feature contributing to stress-related illness for my teachers.

Twelve interviewees experienced problems with large percentages of EBD children in mixed ability classes, with 'behaviour patterns a lot harder to handle, the percentage of these students within a group getting greater,' (Maureen). School was 'like a lunatic asylum. We're bombarded with rudeness from every direction' (Sally). Teachers highlighted 'the lunacy some children operate under, the dramas, huge numbers of statemented children. It's more and more like a battleground' (Rebecca).

Margot, Stephen, Sally, Celia and Charlotte, taught high numbers of children across the school, and GCSE to the full ability range. Music, art, and drama were chosen by large numbers of children with special needs, needing 'one-to-one attention' (Margot). Teachers reported little directed time with SEN staff. Margot with 'a huge rate of success from very low ability kids, some of the worst kids in school, probably the only GCSE they'll get' felt managing these students was 'where it's falling down, the behavioural problems. You only need one or two who are really barmy, where you can't get through to them'. Others had similar difficulties. Mixed ability teaching was 'frustrating. In a typical class, you've got ones who can barely write and geniuses. You don't have a chance to give them what they need' (Rebecca). Large amounts of emotional energy was needed getting these children settled in order to teach them.

To get a class in, attentive, quiet, the ones who throw things, kick things, bouncing balls, throwing pencils, ripping up each other's books, was twenty minutes, strategically arrange all of them, so this one wasn't next to that one. Within an hour, there were so many different difficult things - prevent a fight breaking out, stop them routing a little less able boy, one child would have a panic attack, one child's hearing aid would stop working ... all of which you were trying to sort out, yet trying simultaneously to teach them.

(Rebecca)

Marcus' narrative illustrates the problems of policy decisions to widen the 11-16 curriculum to the full ability spectrum. A foreign language was made compulsory for all pupils. This decision caused him much

frustration. What I was teaching, I didn't find frustrating. Who I was teaching I found frustrating. ... French was set. I was the only one who had them all together, every day, last thing on Tuesdays and the dreaded Friday. ... These kids shouldn't have been learning French, 8 of them statemented, EBD's on special reports ... I was a highly qualified, highly paid professional, paid for teaching French to people who were never going to learn French. These kids can't read and write on their own. When you reached their ceiling, it was very frustrating for them'.

Emily felt similarly. 'I know I was good at my job, my results as good as colleagues. I was fine with bright kids. My real problem was getting high-level stuff through to low-level kids'.

The daily management of negative emotional transactions with students undermined professional roles, contributing to losses in confidence and competency, and less effectiveness in managing classroom emotional climates.

Managing aggression

Increasing numbers of children were perceived as communicating through directing aggression towards property and individuals.

It's a hard school. We've kids running in and out of classrooms, smashing windows. I'm trying to teach, have to go out. The toilet roll's on fire. They've kicked the u-bend off the sink. It's flooding the toilets. They've

smashed the mirrors. There are children chucking water bombs around, pushing people down stairs. (Sally)

They're setting off fire alarms, stealing, having fights, pulling people out of other classes, visiting each other, holes punched in walls, departments getting ransacked, computers messed up, graffiti, litter everywhere. (Charlotte)

In some schools, children's aggression was perceived as setting the agenda, emotional climates within some schools increasingly governed by particular pupils' stress emotions and anti-social behaviours, creating stress for other pupils and for teachers. 'The needy ones cry out for attention. I'm forced for the sake of everybody to deal with them first. If they didn't think that you were taking any notice, they started wrecking things' (Celia). In Castlerigg, for example, 'loss of control' became 'more widespread' (Maureen).

Somehow, between the boys and the girls, and the two different philosophies of dealing with students, emerged a space in which troublesome kids could operate. The worst of both worlds emerged. Students exploited the differences, playing off one kind of teaching against another, playing off individual teachers against each other, a niche they're continuing to exploit. The disruptive ones have created almost a way of life in the school now. (Edward)

Breaking disruptive behaviour patterns in class was often unsuccessful. Sally for example, perceived 'no backup from the top ... delays of 25 minutes too long', with

pupils continuing to behave badly in front of observing senior management. Discipline policies emphasising punishments such as isolation, detention, exclusion, were viewed as inadequate, not addressing underlying causes, exacerbating challenging behaviours. 'They refuse to do detention' (Sally).

Because of behavioural problems, they've lost out on skills and they've *become* Special Needs. They're being excluded and isolated, instead of getting more not less attention. We're punishing them. They're getting suspended. They come back. They've lost out even more. You're not going to get anything but bad behaviour. They want to sort out their own problems, so you get all this argy-bargy. (Charlotte)

Teachers are reported as 'crying out for proper training to help them cope safely with aggressive pupils' (Neumark, 1999). Dealing with children possessing such low emotional competencies was outside many of these teachers' experience. Marcus, for example, without specialist training or special needs assistance, experienced 'a big mental shock, having managed for 20 years to control children, and therefore educate them, I suddenly couldn't. The first time ever I'd had discipline problems. Once a day I was out of control'. With a reputation as a 'disciplinarian', it was important for Marcus to have power *over* his pupils (Blase and Anderson, 1995). This group of students controlled the emotional climate in Marcus' classroom as he met aggression with aggression, his anger,

having no effect. The red mist coming over me, so I felt out of control. That made me angrier, shaking with anger, such a strong emotion. My vision would blur, I was so taut with anger. There was a need to dominate the kid

because he'd done something I couldn't accept. He probably didn't know why I couldn't accept it. That was the frustrating part. They didn't understand they'd done anything wrong.

Student emotion, like teacher emotion, was managed here through abnormalisation, students designated 'loopy, sods' (Sally), 'leftovers' (Rebecca), 'lunatics' (Jonathon), 'nutcases' (Margot), 'grots, barmy as fuck' (Charlotte), 'immoral' (Edward), 'little oiks, rabble, little shits' (Marcus).

Changes in curriculum, inclusion policies and management responses to dealing with children with special needs, meant the type of pupil in classrooms altered, 'new lads coming through, permanent exclusion from elsewhere' (Alex), leading to feelings of loss of control over emotional management. This loss was a common feature of these teachers' experiences, adding to feelings of personal failure. Marcus for example, 'couldn't win with these pupils. There didn't seem any logic in the way they behaved, mentally aggressive towards one another, not predictable in how they're going to react. ... I felt it was *my* fault, something lacking in *me*'. 'Students' views had prevailed and I had fallen' (Gareth).

Managing abuse

We've more kids who haven't got an educational ethos. You're fighting that ... Kids abusing myself, and my colleagues. They suck you dry. I'm sick of the lying, sick of being a sponge. (Jonathon)

According to A. Terry, a doctoral student at Keele University, (cited in Thornton, 1998), 'the problem of teachers being bullied by pupils is more pervasive than generally accepted and could be contributing to stress-related illnesses'. Seven teachers here perceived abuse from students as precipitating stress-related illness. Emily for example, felt 'definitely bullied', enduring a 'beastly hate campaign. Two girls I'd clashed with engineered a revolt. Certain people actively took part, others enjoyed it vicariously'. This incident culminated in Emily receiving 'professional support'.

Both teachers and pupils experienced threats to personal safety and well-being from distressed children. Sally felt 'we're all abused all the time'. She spoke of an incident where her colleague was 'hit by a sports bag thrown from the top window', and was now unable to work due to spinal damage. Marcus for example, suffered several recent painful incidents, causing him to 'lose face', and thus professional self-esteem. An 11-year-old's obscenities led him to 'grab her by the ear. March her out of the room'. Accused of assault by the parent, he recounted how he was forced by management to apologise to the girl and her mother, while 'the child was not expected to apologise to [him]'. He was physically threatened in a crowded school corridor by a student's boyfriend:

A lot of people heard. Some would say: 'Isn't that great? He threatened a teacher'. What they didn't see, was him half an hour later, in the Head's study, saying: 'I'm terribly sorry, Sir. It won't happen again'. He gets back into society. He doesn't say: 'I was very humble'. They just see him getting away with it. That's frustrating and demeaning, the type of thing I'm not happy about'.

Five years previously, Marcus was 'sent home in a state of shock' after a violent incident with a 'strongly built, butch-type 15 year old girl'.

I was teaching. The door burst open. She burst in, yelling to friends. I asked her to leave. She ignored me, carried on yelling as if I wasn't there. I took her by her jacket lapels, propelled her out of the room backwards until she got against a wall. She was f'ing and blinding, kicking, spitting. I lost my temper, kept hold of her, which meant I got head-butted.

This incident was not forgotten in school. Just before his period of stress-related illness, a boy in his troublesome group (see above) destroyed the emotional climate of his classroom, blurting out,

'Your sister beat him up (pointing at me). She did, didn't she, Sir? Didn't she head-butt you?' Trying to get it out of his head was very difficult. He had no thoughts I'd be upset by the memory of this. He thought it was great fun. The most important thing in his life was to tell everyone I'd been beaten up by this girl's sister. It brought the incident back, causing me hassle.

Support from senior staff was often perceived as lacking:

Confrontation in the past, I was always backed up, won the confrontation with help from a year tutor or headmaster. The incident was closed then for me. In recent times, the incident didn't close, preyed on my mind for long periods of time. (Marcus)

Much research findings show female teachers suffer much stress from cultural frameworks linking power and sexuality (McKinnon, 1979). Women here talked of coping with 'constant sexual innuendo ... a lot of sexual harassment from 16-18 year old boys' (Emily), not taken seriously by management:

The Head said: 'Don't turn your back on them'. That was the support we got ... locked into having to endure extremes of sexual harassment we found extremely hard. It's very difficult to tell a man what that feels like, the undermining, the impulse on boys and men to do it. The huge indignation you feel, that they don't see. They don't understand, think you're making a fuss about nothing, should shrug it off. You're a 'stropky Women's Libber', rather than expressing something very profound.

While on corridor patrol, Rebecca suffered a violent, unprovoked sexual assault during morning break by a 12-year-old male pupil with severe emotional and behavioural problems.

It was painful. He came out from behind me, making direct eye contact with me, and walked down the stairs leering at me like a dirty old man, all the way down, as if to say: 'What are you going to do about it?' I just froze, couldn't believe it had happened.

Accusations of sexual misconduct, while unfounded, cause great distress. 'Mud sticks' (Ralph). Morag's breakdown was precipitated by 'this lad putting it about I'd been having it away with him in my room. I was terrified'. Morag claimed management had known about these accusations for some time, but had not informed

her. No steps were taken to resolve the situation with the student. 'I just thought: "Shit that's it. Teaching up the swanney"'. It was really a frightener. Handed my notice in'.

Teachers here also experienced great distress due to students abusing students. Sally's narrative for example, well illustrates how witnessing many aggressive and violent acts deeply affects teacher emotion. She called an ambulance for a boy fitting after being hit over the head with a chair by a child bully. She later witnessed a 'very serious assault' by a 15-year-old boy on a younger girl who was

very severely beaten. He punched her in the face with the force a man would punch another man, five hard punches. The third blow I could hear it crack. I thought he's going to kill her. Another six-foot male teacher watched, didn't intervene. I put myself in between, holding on to this boy who was bigger than me, looking at the girl thinking: 'Christ, look at her face'. Saying to her friends: 'Keep her back, get her and follow us'. He was going to punch *me*, and stopped. He shoved me violently.

Sally 'could not get over' such incidents:

The stress of these incidents affected me physically and mentally. I risked my life to save this girl. That's what tipped me over the edge. Nobody ever stops to think of the effect on you. I hadn't had lunch let alone a cup of tea. A brandy might have been useful! When I went back in, I wrote the report, shaking, crying, in shock, exhausted. When I took it to the Head, 'put it in my tray' was all he said. Five minutes later I was taking the register, still

crying, then teaching all afternoon [The boy] was still being rude to me, harassing me, accusing me of 'fingering' myself, three months later.

Such emotional transactions were part and parcel of the day-to-day lives of these teachers, the 'underlying problem' viewed as 'the prevailing culture of indiscipline where disruptive pupils severely jeopardize the learning opportunities of the majority' (Sally). Teachers felt their ethical principles violated.

Moral Outrage

Emotion plays a fundamental role in moral life (Oakley, 1992). Teachers felt 'moral outrage' (Sally) at the 'lack of justice' (Charlotte) for themselves, colleagues and students. While the public primary purpose of education was perceived as raising educational standards to make Britain more competitive, most teachers here believed they were failing in their duty of care towards their students. Students, a major source of 'affective satisfaction and emotional security', occupy a central place in teachers' emotionality (Nias, 1996: 300). However, loss of the 'intimacy of teaching children' (Golby, 1996: 432) was perceived here as one of the negative consequences of educational reform, teachers finding it harder to sustain emotional commitments to students (Hargreaves, 1999).

Over the last few decades, teachers have played major roles in children's academic, physical and emotional well-being (Phillips, 1999), spending an enormous amount of time on unofficial (and unrewarded) pastoral care, the 'desperately upset' child who comes for help, '[It's] social work - coffee and tissues on tap' (Jessica). As curriculum delivery took priority over student care, time available for supporting

students was minimal. Teachers had less time to nurture, to explain, to increase pupils' emotional literacy, and to increase their own emotional competencies. Teachers felt hugely this loss of time formerly devoted to the emotion work aspects in supporting troubled children, important aspects of vocational teaching. They felt no longer able to help children master essential social and emotional skills that might help inoculate them against the many perils they face in childhood and adolescence such as substance abuse, depression, unwanted pregnancy. These skills include regulating emotional distress, self-awareness of and management of feelings, impulse control, empathy and perspective taking, co-operation and settling disputes.

School discipline policies dictated prescribed formal channels for dealing with distressed or disruptive children, who were to be sent to year heads or senior management team members, which then 'adversely affects standards of teaching and learning in their own work areas' (Sally). Troubled children were no longer allowed to choose who helped them. Directed time was not provided for middle management to manage these children, nor was managing student emotion dealt with collectively:

The *real* cause of my stress was a hard core of about a dozen *real* problem characters. I sat down with a senior teacher and the Head. We identified them, the target list, but it was left to me to do the monitoring on my own.
(Ralph)

Feelings of competency declined. Teachers lost motivation and hope of improving children's competencies. Ralph for example,

didn't see [him]self being able to bring about even minor changes. I found it dispiriting to be back at the beginning of term. You'd been making incremental progress all through term. They were learning to control their tempers, modifying their behaviour. But because there was no control at home during the vacation, it was a case of having to start all over again. That began to get me down.

Teachers felt students' emotional problems were not addressed, causing severe problems for other students, and for teachers. 'Children getting away with behaviour that needed to be sorted out' (Sally). There was little concentration on developing these children's emotional competencies. 'You don't see anything happening to correct kids' behaviour' (Marcus). 'If you can't get them right mentally, then you're up a gum tree' (Jonathon). Rebecca observed 'so many children slipping through the net, not diagnosed properly until it's almost too late to get help. They lose their bottle, lose confidence ... It's so neglected'. As Schools Minister, Estelle Morris, declared, 'far too often we have said to teachers you have to teach, you aren't social workers, but children can't learn until all these problems have been dealt with' (Passmore, 1999). A recent DfEE report blamed teachers for misidentifying serious emotional and behavioural difficulties as 'naughtiness', hindering opportunities to gain support (Thornton, 1999). However, teachers here identified school policies as failing to meet the needs of such pupils. Gareth for example, 'was left dealing with students whose problems and issues [he] just wasn't aware of. Nor was there any attempt to make me aware, to improve my skills. It was as if that part of things was of no concern of mine, it didn't matter'.

Pastoral care lacked effective action. Sally 'wasn't happy about the outcome' of the last violent assault she interrupted:

We had not done the right thing ... I'm not going to work for a Head who's happy to have a violent boy wandering around who could actually kill a girl. I'm still very upset about it. That girl's going to go through the rest of her life thinking: 'This boy's allowed to punch me'. We've let this girl down. We've also let the boy down. He's learned to punch women. God help any girl who crosses him. It's on file he's assaulted girls several times. He has a real problem, needs some kind of therapy. He's psychologically disturbed, dangerous. He was isolated for a few days. The children need to know we are not happy to have a boy who is going to be violent to them.

The boy who assaulted Rebecca did not receive appropriate support. 'He had lots of problems. It was absolutely essential he got help'. Rebecca felt 'quite constrained by [her acting head's] reaction not to call the police. I wanted to get him assessed, get him to a psychologist, which I was really trying to press'. However, specialist care was not forthcoming. Rebecca felt her school failed in its duty of care, failing to protect the boy from further harm. 'He was still in trouble. His behaviour continued. Eventually he was moved to another school, excluded over all sorts of other things after I left'.

After Marcus was headbutted, he

insisted the police were sent for. She was taken singing and dancing to the police station. The Duty Officer said she was drunk. He couldn't do

anything with her. She was sent back to her mother, who couldn't control her. By the end of the school day she was back on the street walking past school as if nothing had happened.

Schools were perceived as 'closed' communities. Teachers here felt the need to maintain pupil numbers and protect school reputations led to secrecy about the problems many schools faced. They believed this compounded schools' problems in delivering programmes enabling students to understand and regulate destructive impulses, to manage conflict, build emotional literacy and improve behaviour standards.

This is my anger. It's negligence. Schools are risking children's lives. We've got cover-ups. It's frightening. It's time people realised teachers are not going to tell because 'we've got to keep it out of the papers'. It's immoral. This kind of thing is endemic. The school will not admit this boy was very seriously assaulted, trying to stand up to a bully, fitting as a result of concussion. I've never forgiven the Head. We lie. That frightens me. It's got to stop. Teachers have to have the guts to start fighting. (Sally)

Teachers thus felt moral outrage that schools were failing in their 'duty of care' towards students.

The emotional labour surrounding teaching and learning became very hard both to accomplish and to bear within negative emotional climates. Teachers' and pupils' personal safety and well-being was threatened by the individual and cumulative actions of abusive colleagues and pupils, through verbal, physical and emotional

means, teachers positioned in situations where emotional overload contributed to stress-related illness.

Teachers not only experienced stress in schools, they also experienced stress within their home lives. In the next chapter I consider the ways in which the home was a stressful arena for my teachers.

CHAPTER 5. 'EGGSHELL DAYS' IN THE HOME

It was like walking on eggshells or a knife-edge: 'If I do this, what's going to happen? If I do that, what's going to happen? Shall I just sit here? Do nothing? What are the rules?' I couldn't predict his reaction. (Ralph's wife, Gina)

In modernity, with the separation of public and private spheres, and the gendered division of labour, the home was viewed as the site for the legitimate expression of emotion, emotional expression deemed inappropriate within the workplace (Zaretsky, 1976). Family relations functioned as 'a human alternative to the inhumanity of social relations at work', the private sphere 'a place of sanctuary for all the hunted, jaded, exhausted sentiments out of place in commodity production' (Rowbotham, 1973:59). Within familial ideology, women undertook emotional labouring roles, acting as 'society's emotional sponges' (James, 1989: 24), soaking up workplace tension, and providing 'emotional warmth and stability for the whole family ... good tension-free relationships between family members' (Oakley, 1974: 181). The emotional stability of the workplace was conditional upon the family's ability to absorb emotional trauma, nourishing men and children, returning them refreshed to the public sphere (Rowbotham, 1973).

Modernity beliefs and values were challenged in the mid-twentieth century, scholars deconstructing modernity principles, highlighting the embeddedness of knowledge and power (Foucault, 1980; Irigaray, 1985). The nuclear family as a haven providing refuge and creating warmth and harmony was exposed as a myth (Elkind, 1994), the family identified as a potential site of emotional stability *and* emotional trauma,

authority often imposed unilaterally through the covert exercise of physical and emotional abuse (Miller, 1987). Traditional assumptions concerning the separation of working life and personal worlds were challenged. Within the workplace, as Kanter (1992: 284) points out, 'emotional attachments are not kept within bounds'. There is increasing evidence of 'spill-over' effects (Rice, 1984) where 'stress arising from one sphere (family or employment) affects the other' (Ginn & Sandell, 1997: 420). Evidence suggests three mechanisms influence stress levels within family life:

- a) common stressful life events affecting both partners;
- b) direct transmission, where the stress of one partner increases the levels of distress in the other through sympathetic responses and empathy;
- c) indirect transmission, where the stress of one partner increases levels of frustration, triggering or exacerbating negative marital behaviours and socially undermining communication patterns (Westman and Vinokur, 1998).

Significant domestic difficulties may be experienced due to work-related stress (Jackson and Maslach, 1982; Dinham, 1997). While good family relationships may ameliorate distress, providing the buffer of social support (Leiter, 1990), home arenas can also be potentially significant contributors to work-related stress (Cooper and Davidson, 1987). According to Redwood (1998), 'stress in the classroom is a family affair', Peter Lewis, founder of the helpline Concerned Spouses of Suffering Teachers (COSST), declaring, 'The public should get some idea of the suffering in teachers' households. Believe me. It can be terrifying'.

In this chapter, I explore stress emotions and stress transmission within teachers' home lives. Teacher and family testimonies reveal multiple stressors originating in

home spheres, spillover effects acting as key change agents on family emotional structures and family health.

Family Stressors

While new forms of work in the public sphere created new demands in schools, these teachers and their families continued to hold responsibilities for 'old' forms of work within family spheres. When these were called in, the family domain became another stressful arena, where demands outstripped resources, through the conflicting requirements not only of 'triple shifts', namely work, childcare and domestic tasks (Acker, 1995) but also of elder care and spousal care. Children, partners and elders competed for scarce 'quality time', a 'threatened form of personal capital' (Hochschild, 1997: 51).

For Celia, Emily, Morag, Rachel, Sally, Alex, Andrew, Jonathon, Luke, and William, pressures within home spheres contributed to the onset of stress-related illness, the 'emotional things going on in life' (Jonathon).

I'd a horrendous time for a couple of years ... You may be able to cope [with abuses in school] if you've no other problems, no other responsibilities. All these contribute to the whole picture. My grandmother's dying. An elderly friend is ill. I'm teaching all day, directing a big production. I'm racing over to the hospice. My father is ill, operated on. My mother, in her 70's, can't cope. My sister's cracked up. I remember leaving school, driving to the hospital, sitting with Dad, dealing with the awful things happening there. [During Ofsted] Dad caught MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus*

aureus), died under horrendous circumstances. OFSTED I just didn't take much notice of, more important things to worry about, Dad on a ventilator. I was very close to him. I was in a hell of a state. Huge emotional trauma when he died, complaints to the hospital, Ombudsman's report, newspapers.

(Sally)

Rachel's 'family problems made life so difficult, coping at school got out of hand'. Death and dying, healthcare, and family-related issues are among the major five themes in the top stressful life events (Van Eck et al, 1998; Van Someren, 1998). The main themes in my research were managing loss, managing chronic illness, and managing the home shift.

Managing loss

The loss of important personal relationships is a crucial factor precipitating emotional breakdown (Westman and Vinokur, 1998). For Luke, Alex, Morag, Celia, Emily and Marcus relationship breakup threatened emotional stability. Luke was 'devastated, extremely angry, then frightened of how I'd behave - not violent towards anybody, violent towards objects'. Alex's Ofsted inspection coincided with confirmation of partner Paula's affair. 'I was in shreds, the anger swelling in me'.

Alex, William, Rachel, Maureen, Sally, Edward and Marcus experienced the deaths of parent(s), close friends or colleagues in the build-up to breakdown. The deaths of both parents within two years, profoundly affected Alex. 'When Mum died, that's when I really shifted about. Used to think of my own mortality, living day-for-day, carpe diem'. For Rachel 'it all came to a head when Dad died. I did respect him

enormously, respected his mind. When he died, the anger bubbled out. That was part of my grieving’.

The loss of personal relationships created unplanned transitions, involving discontinuities in life spaces, triggering psychological and physiological pain (Adams et al, 1976). Alex was unable to complete his inspection week. Consumed with grief after the breakup with Paula, he stopped dealing with personal care, eating, washing, shaving, engrossed with finding ways of punishing her. However, these teachers found teaching responsibilities did not allow time to navigate the grief cycle comprising progression and regression through phases of denial, rage and anger, bargaining, preparatory depression, and acceptance (Kubler-Ross, 1975. Rachel, for example, while grieving for her father, felt overwhelmed by work overload, colleagues and pupils relying on her to prepare materials and introduce GNVQ. In western post-modern society, there is often no forum for the expression of grief emotions. Grieving was repressed, pushed into the ‘bottom drawer’, often to resurface later (see chapter 3). ‘It was put away. I didn’t accept a grieving process at the end of that relationship, didn’t talk about Angie to people’ (Luke).

Acute stressors such as bereavement and relationship breakdown influenced long-term health and well-being through ‘knock-on’ effects increasing daily hassles (DeLongis et al, 1982), leading to the creation of chronic stressors (Pearlin, 1989). Emily and Celia endured financial hardship post-divorce. Without the domestic and emotional services of partners, Luke and Alex became increasingly unable to cope with the activities of daily living. Luke for example,

having Angie out of my life, didn't enjoy going home. My home environment got really messy. I didn't bother doing ironing, washing, couldn't be bothered to wash pots. I was living like a pig, didn't see it as a mess; That's how it was for 12 months, gradually building up. I'd actually take days off work to tidy up.

Marital breakup led to long-term management of children's emotional distress for Celia, Marcus and Emily. 'I have to be around for Angus. He finds life hard. He's still very emotionally dependent on me, never been easy, always had a big chip on his shoulder about his situation, always felt hard-done-by. Life is never fair' (Celia). Conflicting needs of divorced parents caused emotional turmoil. For four years before her breakdown, Emily fought a lengthy unpleasant and costly battle through the courts for financial settlement. The spring before Celia's breakdown, 'Angus's father invited him to live with him for a year abroad. That threw Angus into trauma, threw me into trauma. He can't sleep at night. He cries. That's another thing we're working through'.

The home arena thus was another increasingly visible arena of distress.

Managing chronic and terminal illness

Managing family illness incurs much trajectory work (see chapter 6). Families feel moral obligations to care for ill family members (Radley, 1994). 'My marriage vows are very important to me, that I was there to care for him in sickness and in health' (Rachel). 'It's the duty of the children to look after the parents' (William). 'That was my role. I was an only child' (Alex).

Caring for chronically ill partners or parents increased emotional and physical labour through role re-assignments, responsibility sharing and attachment (Papadopoulos, 1995). ‘Gestures of caring’ included alertness to others’ needs, giving time for conversation, listening to feelings, communicating by giving of the self, showing love, concern, and empathy, anticipating emotions such as grief, anger, despair, and frustration (Smith, 1992). For twelve years Rachel’s husband Matthew, a former teacher, had been unable to work due to stress-related illness. While Rachel felt responsible for his daily care, financial need meant returning to teaching:

Although I knew I needed to work, Matthew needed me at home. I was terribly torn. That was very difficult to cope with. In the back of my mind, even before he admitted it, I thought he might commit suicide. He needed me there just to keep him company.

Rachel was also simultaneously coping with teenagers Michael, suffering depression, and Ruth with unstable diabetes.

Chronic illness depleted emotional capital. Lindsey, William’s wife, diagnosed with severe ME (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis), spent lengthy periods housebound. Hospital visits and the constant search for treatment were exhausting and traumatic. William felt unable to meet her demands for stimuli:

She’d ask what was going on at school. It was like an inquisition, not meaningful discussion. I tended to resent it. Every time I went out I was expected to give full detailed accounts of everything said, everything done.

As life-spans increase, and community care encourages families to look after elders within their own homes, the burden of care falls on children. Family members live at greater distances from each other. Attending to elders demanded time spent travelling to and from parental homes. For eighteen months before her breakdown, Rachel journeyed a round trip of 250 miles fortnightly to visit her dying father. Alex drove several hundred miles weekly between his home, university and his parental home, supporting his mother through bereavement and, in her final months with terminal cancer, providing virtually fulltime care.

Family routines changed to encompass frail parents' daily needs, reducing time for other family and school tasks. Andrew's 'schedule was hectic' for five months after father-in-law's stroke, 'leaving straight from school. Returning home around 8.30 we'd have a quick meal. We ate more convenience foods. I'd sit in the hospital car park, marking work'. During this period, his mother-in-law, who had angina and had suffered minor heart attacks, was hospitalised several times with recurrent nosebleeds.

During the three years before William's breakdown, his father died of cancer. His mother then developed cancer, becoming very demanding. 'I had to keep an eye on her, check she was eating properly. That took a lot of time'. His wife, Lindsey, described how his mother emotionally manipulated both sons through guilt and shame, socially undermining William's confidence and self-esteem:

If he didn't see her daily, when he next went, she'd say: 'I'm more important than school'. She'd say: 'Good teachers never bring work home. Your dad never did, so you shouldn't'. Before Ofsted she had to go into a

nursing home. Somebody had to tell her she was never going home. It had to be William. She refused to speak to him again.

Family illness incurred loss of support from sick family members. Rachel's husband Matthew, for example, 'wasn't able to help the family, to support us, causing problems, quite paranoid, depressed. He went on Prozac It was at that point I started not to cope'.

The removal of obligations for the sick incurred extra duties. William's mother for example, expected her two sons to provide total emotional and physical care. 'They had two years of virtually going every day. She didn't want Social Services, didn't want anybody in. The family will do it. She expected the garden kept, housework done, expected you to go talk to her' (William's wife, Lindsey). William was the only male in this sample to hold total responsibility for home care. With three teenaged children, caring for his wife and mother, and running the home, he found no time for himself. 'He'd got rather a lot on his plate!' (Lindsey).

For these teachers, schools were perceived as largely unsympathetic to, and unsupportive of, the demands of family illness. 'I felt, here was I, a teacher, working my guts out to help children, and they couldn't give me any help' (Rachel). Andrew's headteacher, when informed of family difficulties, offered support. However, when Andrew got behind with his marking, he was formally told in writing by school management, 'Never again let your personal problems interfere with school work'. From Andrew's viewpoint, schoolwork had interfered with personal life.

Teachers felt an increased sense of guilt over spending time and energy on family care, deemed 'no more than most middle-aged people have to cope with' (Andrew's wife, Sarah). Rachel felt

almost blamed for having to cope with personal problems by colleagues at school. I was putting my job in jeopardy, almost as if I was too caring. I was made to feel guilty by some. I don't think they could understand ... If I'd been in an office job, I would've had a day off to take Matthew to a doctor. But because I'd got colleagues, I'd got children I had to be there for, I couldn't take the day off.

Managing home shifts

The responsibilities of post-modern family life pose 'acute problems of logistics and organization' (Huberman, 1993: 36). Many teachers find it increasingly difficult to balance the needs of work and family life (Wallace, 1997). The home/work interface presented severe problems here. Schools were not viewed as 'family-friendly'. Promotion for example, was viewed as incompatible with family life. Terence was informed by his female headteacher, 'You can't be a successful head and be married with a family. You won't ever become a head because you're too committed to your family'.

Families were very 'needy. At weekends my twelve-year-old son, Angus, he wants me, and Calum, my three-year-old wants me, and Hector, my present husband, has this fantasy of us doing everything as a family!' (Celia). It was primarily women in this sample who talked of emotional work in smoothing family relationships. Rachel's

husband, Matthew 'would scream and shout at the kids. I got to the point where I was feeling I had to protect the children all the time. It wasn't a physical battering. It was a mental one'.

Children's problems created much emotional trauma, through coming to terms with sexual preference (Charlotte), attempted suicide (Rebecca), relationship breakdowns (Marcus, Stephen, Charlotte, Rebecca), and exam stress (Rachel, Ralph, Stephen, William, Jessica). Stress was directly transmitted through sympathetic responses and empathy (Westman and Vinokur, 1998). Rachel's thirteen-year-old son Michael for example, has 'dyslexic type problems, very, very bright, wasn't learning to read. The reaction we got was he's just a naughty little boy'. For several years before Rachel's breakdown, Rachel and Matthew fought recurrent battles with their local authority to have Michael assessed. The Dyslexia Association diagnosed Michael as 'discalculate, with the verbal reasoning of an eighteen year old'. The year prior to Rachel's breakdown, 'before SATs, Michael got himself into such a state, diarrhoea and vomiting in the mornings, he literally couldn't get out of bed'. She recalled his self-esteem 'going down and down and down. He'd said to me: "Look Mummy, all I want to be is a normal little boy". I remember that. It really hurt. I was suffering the pain Michael went through'.

My teachers showed the strength of modernity social attitudes regarding the gendered division of labour. Apart from William, men did not talk about pressures coping with day-to-day home care if they had partners. The burden of home shifts fell largely on women, who talked of difficulties being primary carers, carrying full domestic loads. Conflicting cultural directives, that women should achieve success in both maternal and occupational roles, created severe role conflict (Lewis and Cooper, 1983).

Women teachers here viewed balancing work and home as less difficult for men, gendered caring regimes meaning male and female teachers leading

completely different lives. There's a vast difference between men and women in school. Men seem to be able to cut off much better. It's just a job. They can go home and wind down because their wife has made dinner, or cleaned up, or is only doing a part-time job. The majority of the women I work with are full-timers, and it's hard for them, very hard. (Margot)

Several women here joked about needing a wife's services. Most husbands took little responsibility for domestic routines. 'I might wash-up, make tea, pack sandwiches for the next day. ... It doesn't come naturally' (Jessica's husband, Frank). Margot perceived change in domestic routines contributing to the onset of illness. 'I've always done all the shopping, housework. I got a cleaner to help share the load, but she dropped out last year, just before I started to feel ill'. Living in a small village, she was unable to replace that domestic labour.

Male teachers were viewed as unappreciative of female teachers' family responsibilities. 'A lot of men expect you won't mention that. They won't accommodate it, because they have wives that do it for them. Even if their wives work, they still expect their wives to do it for them' (Celia). 'The Head's whole purpose revolves around school. He can't understand why other people don't feel like that' (Ralph's wife, Gina). Male teachers had different conceptions of time, as Margot observed:

They can't even be bothered to turn up on time. At meetings, there have only been women in the room. I want to say: 'For God's sake hurry up'. They haven't got to go home and make dinner. It's obvious they don't have to look after the kids.

Gendered childcare regimes caused conflict. Celia, for example, 'resented' the invisibility of women's nurturing role:

[Childcare/domestic work] is traditionally what women have done. For years I used to think why is it that, when two people are working, the man never does it? My husband's a university lecturer, under a lot of pressure, works very long hours. He's not physically there most of the day. Part of me thinks: 'Why can't we be equal partners? Why can't he do childcare?' He's not going to come home at 4 o'clock. I can have as many tantrums as I like. He'll just say: 'No, I'm not coming home'.

While women's ideas of gendered roles were slowly changing, men were perceived as retaining modernity ideals of role differentiation:

I still haven't got him to acknowledge that was the case. A lot of men aren't programmed to see it's unfair. He can't see it, even now. So it's useless to argue. Until he can come to his own self-knowledge, you can't make people change faster than they want to. (Celia)

Family schedules, and fears for children's safety outside the home, imposed greater burdens on parents, 'taking them backwards and forwards to sport, band practice and

scouts, because we didn't like them coming back late at night in the dark on their own' (Andrew).

As responsibilities within the home increased, and opportunities for experiencing positive emotional experiences declined, the home lost its focus as a forum for stress release, as William well illustrates:

Lindsey didn't want us to book up to go anywhere because we might not be able to go. Everything dried up. It was cutting off the release valves. I couldn't release stress anywhere, couldn't release it at home. I wasn't getting out anywhere, wasn't relaxing. I didn't have time to get to the allotment. The garden went. I was too tired. With parents dying, Lindsey going downhill, frustrated, and me having to look after her, I took my eye off a bit, shut myself off to protect myself, without realizing it and that's when I raised this cocoon around myself.

Families had to come to terms with feelings of loss, insecurity, uncertainty and frustration. Emotional resources were depleted through providing emotional services such as physical care and monitoring, handling fears and frustrations, handling adjustments required by other family members, drawing on one's own emotional resources, and exercising emotional control of the self.

Recent research notes that the conflicts imposed by work and home responsibilities may lead employees to view the workplace as a retreat from distress in the home (Hochschild, 1997). Work can be therapeutic, its effects mitigating stress from home

lives (Lewis and Cooper, 1983). Rachel 'used to go to school to escape what was going on at home'.

When I was in the classroom, everything was fine. That was my sanctuary. I was successful at what I was doing there. Probably the only place I felt valued at that particular time. That's where I was in control. (Luke)

However, as the tensions of implementing government reform increased, 'school no longer functioned in this way' (Rachel). While family trauma caused much distress, 'it was much less than the other things' (Celia). The overwhelming majority of interviewees believed work stress triggered emotional breakdown, as Margot declared,

to a certain extent, working women are all going to find this sort of stress [in the home], but it was manageable until this stress at work. The burden of work was being made too much to bear.

As both home and school became sites of emotional trauma, family health suffered as emotional distress spilled across differing spheres.

Spillover

For my kids, my husband, they were eggshell days. They were thinking: 'Oh God! What's she going to come home like?' When I did come home, it was: 'Get out the way!' The kids used to go into their rooms, probably stuff cotton wool in their ears while I exploded! (Jessica)

Spillover occurs when 'stresses experienced in either the work or home domain lead to stresses in the other domain' (Bolger et al, 1989: 175). Teachers and their families reported stress emotion spilling over from school on to home environments, and vice versa. Their analysis of home and working lives demonstrates the interdependence of spheres. 'Clearly my stress was work-related and obviously the relationship had affected my work' (Alex).

School stressors colonising the home

Work colonised family time, stress creating emotional tension through indirect transmission (Westman and Vinokur, 1988). The ability to separate spheres, a key tenet of stress management, was impaired. 'I'd wake up in the night thinking about the job so I was separating out a lot less' (Marcus). 'It was difficult to cut off. At what point I lost that ability I don't know. At one stage I was quite good at forgetting about work' (Rachel). They recalled 'bringing too much of other people's burdens home' (Margot). Terence 'used to come home feeling very depressed. Argue more than I needed. My wife took the brunt of it'. Jessica's husband Frank recalled how 'getting knocked at school' affected Jessica's 'whole outlook on life. She wasn't in a position to bite back at school, the natural human reaction. It has to come out some way, bites at the people around you, the family'. Celia found it 'very emotionally draining. You end up pushing stuff inside yourself. You never shout at pupils, or are angry. You're always ultra patient and it was coming out at home'.

The quality of emotional transactions outside school plays a significant role in teachers' wellbeing at work, having 'a serious impact on the performance and morale of a teacher at school' (TBF, 2000:19). Rachel recalled:

Michael wasn't getting the help he needed. Before I went into school Matthew would open letters about this. He'd say to me: 'Look at this. They said this won't happen, that won't happen. What are we going to do about it? I think we should do so and so, and so and so'. I would be panicking about this. I'd be preparing to go to school, thinking I can't cope with this. Gripped before I went into school, the old adrenaline going boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. I didn't have enough time to come down, calm myself, before I was getting BOOM, BOOM, BOOM from the kids. I didn't have what I'd call fighting mode. By the time I got into school the next stage set in. I didn't have the adrenalin to cope with these kids. I was yo-yo-ing from the adrenalin. That went on all through summer term.

Family health problems invaded the classroom literally for William, as Lindsey, teaching in the same school, suffered frequent attacks of illness at school. 'She would just go dizzy, and completely pass out. I was called out of class, having to sort it out'. Chronic high emotional states impeded teachers' ability to respond to the emotional demands of teaching. Jonathon remembered 'shouting at the kids. I felt sorry for that. You go into school so uptight, carrying so much baggage that the kids suffer'.

Teachers and families reported stress contagion traversing multiple spheres. Margot's husband Stuart found worries about Margot now intruded in his working life. 'It's always in the back of one's mind: 'I hope today's gone well. I hope Margot hasn't done anything stupid, that nothing's happened'''. Pauline, teaching in the same school as husband Marcus, experienced two occasions where she carried her 'eggshells' to school and 'erupted in floods of tears':

It was a way of expressing my anger that this should happen. I knew [Marcus' illness] was because of some kids. In a subconscious way I might have been taking it out on the ones I had in front of me, asserting my authority.

Teacher stress traversed connecting spheres contaminating other homes. Frank, Jessica's husband, related how he created 'eggshell days' for employees in his management role in industry.

My mind just wasn't on the job, pre-occupied. You're trying to concentrate. Inevitably you snap at people. I remember feeling guilty about it afterwards. Not when I did it. I wasn't conscious of it when I did it, but afterwards I thought: 'I didn't handle that very well'. Employees have a problem. When the boss is snapping at you, it's not so easy to snap back.

Frank felt his unhappy staff then carried his 'eggshells' home to continue the cycle with their families.

Merging spillover effects

The family sphere became a 'holding environment' (Stapley, 1996) for stress emotion from several working spheres, where both partners, and sometimes, adult children, worked outside the home. For some families, stress emotion from two schools merged (Stephen, Edward, Marcus, Ralph, Alex). As Stephen illustrates, his own stress emotions competed with those of his wife Jenny, and son Bobby:

Jenny teaches in a special needs school. Her job is very stressful, these children very special, special ones! The rules there are changing all the time, more and more severe [cases]. [It's] very upsetting, with children having fits etc frequently. Occasionally you get a death. Bobby worked terrific hours. Gone by 5.30 a.m., not back until midnight, the same the next day, travelling all over the country. We were concerned about his well-being. Absolutely nothing was going right for him.

Andrew's wife Sarah explained how her health service 'eggshell' emotion colonised their home:

I was having extra pressure at the hospital. You always felt watched. My boss was always asking me to work faster. The stress had got to him. He was relaying it, without realising it, on to other people. Everybody there is overworked and stressed. It's a thing in public services. You have this sense of, not necessarily bullying in the strongest sense, but it goes down the line each layer. I didn't feel like going. I got butterflies. I was getting upset. I

talk about everything I feel to Andrew, tell him if I'm upset, if I'm annoyed.

Women do. So Andrew was supporting me, helping me cope.

Teachers were thus called on to provide emotional support for partners and children at a time when their own coping resources were lessening. As professional and personal worlds collided, the stress 'virus' contaminated interconnecting spheres. Families in this sample were thus caught between spillover emotion from competing institutions, the home being a repository for stress emotions from several arenas that threatened family structures and family health.

Family structures

Frank felt I was destroying the structure of the family. (Jessica.)

Teachers and their families reported damage to family structures occurring as a consequence of stress. Families experienced negative emotional climates, changes in emotion work, and changes in key family emotional competencies such as decision-making, empathy, and communication patterns.

Emotional climate

Emotion repressed in school was not dissipated through benevolent family transactions. Emotional climates within teachers' homes became increasingly negative. 'Margot made everyone's life thoroughly miserable. The slightest word out of place and Boomph!!' (Stuart). For Frank, living with Jessica was 'like trying to walk through a minefield'.

Teachers here indirectly transmitted stress through disruptive behaviours. Maureen analysed her own changed behaviour as 'work control needs displaced onto the home environment. I thought I was losing control in one area [school]. I wanted it back in another [home]'. Jessica became 'fanatical about keeping things neat and tidy. I didn't want to start clearing up after the kids, making meals, wanting everything just so, [to] concentrate on school work'. Jonathon took complete control of domestic routines, from keeping the fridge stocked to loading the washing machine, criticising Jo, who reported suffering verbally if she did not show sufficient gratitude.

Seven families experienced lengthy periods of vacillation between explosive outbursts and insularity. Ralph would 'regularly explode', displaying 'growing impatience, intolerance with everybody', 'little things blown out of all proportion' (Gina). He practised 'classical aggression', becoming 'totally irascible, obsessive'. Gina likened his behaviour to a 'persecution complex, everything sent to try us'. Margot's behaviour swung between two extremes creating alarm:

Initially it was total manic, then a cocoon effect. She was really not on this planet. This insular effect frightened the hell out of me! Her character is quite fiery. It [became] so flat and docile. That was frightening. Total reverse of character basically. (Stuart)

As Ralph's obsessional behaviour intensified, children Fiona and Paul experienced the home atmosphere as 'scary'. Threats to mental health were feared:

This is more frightening than most illness. If you cut your hand off, you don't sit here whittling. You do something very quickly. It wasn't easy to

get her to do that. That's the problem. Medical things are easier to nail down. (Stuart)

Along with GPs, partners tried to stop a too early return to teaching. 'My worry is it could slot back' (Stuart). In eight cases these fears were later realised.

The adoption of individualist stress discourses impacted negatively on family emotion leading to climates of blame and low trust. Some partners had little knowledge of emotional micropolitics and organisational stress. Alicia, Terence's wife, for example

couldn't understand people could be so devastatingly cruel. I'd very little inkling of the politics within school. I felt terribly let down, very accusative, my first thoughts: 'What have you done wrong? Why couldn't you have sorted this out?' I could not be sympathetic. It was difficult to understand how he could just sit back and not fight it, having been such a fighter ... I lacked trust in what he was saying was true, felt his judgments must be wrong.

Family relationships suffered, Jessica and Frank's children 'very annoyed, very resentful'. Fiona described Ralph

snapping, blaming one person. Another person would start blaming the next person. It would go round and round ... Dad would say something to Mum. Mum would say something to me. I'd say something back to Mum. I'd stomp off upstairs. Paul would come down. Dad would say something to Paul. Paul would say something to Mum. Paul would stomp off up the stairs.

Everyone with a frown on their face. He was so picky, you were caught between a rock and a hard place.

The home environment lost its role as a place of refuge and safety. Stuart

didn't look forward to coming home. She was talking about it all the time, how bad it was. It was getting worse. I've heard it so many times before. I knew exactly as soon as I opened the door what I was going to be in for, blurting it all out, day after day.

Jessica reported husband Frank. 'wondering what mood I was going to come home in. dreading coming home. He thought it was going to be another moaning match from me. It does very badly affect your partner'.

The home thus increasingly became a site of tension and insecurity.

Emotion work

Emotion work within the family involves managing the 'interpersonal economy of domestic relationships' (Morgan, 1996: 131), including caring for and caring about family members, dealing with family well-being, health, illness, the body, its control and its maintenance, and smoothing interpersonal relationships.

Divisions of labour with the home were disrupted by spillover stress emotion. These teachers lost their abilities to contribute towards family care. 'I couldn't cope with

normal things like ironing. Cooking dinner was a major task' (Margot). Jessica 'hadn't got time for the kids'. For Alicia and Terence:

It was a time of financial crisis. Terence pushed things away. He'd spent so much time at the computer, preoccupied with what was going on, financial things, all sort of things in the home he hadn't been able to deal with, built up. I was very worried. The only option was I had to work fulltime. Terence was in a terrible state. We had to get out some special loan, not from bank. Things were very much out of control. (Alicia)

The loss of such labour increased demands on partners:

Ralph's the chancellor. These things weren't getting done, normal everyday household jobs. I took over doing things I hadn't done since we were married, paying bills, sorting money out, driving the kids to school, the big shopping. I thought: 'This isn't my job. It's Ralph's'. but for the sake of my sanity and peace and quiet, I was doing them. (Gina)

Children took over tasks normally done by parents. 'The reason this house is clean is because my sons are cleaning it' (Margot). Ralph's daughter Fiona took over ironing and preparing meals.

Teacher stress disrupted established support networks. Maureen, Charlotte, Rachel, Sally, Emily, William, Rebecca, Jessica, and Celia felt unable to support family members sufficiently. 'Jonathon felt very guilty that he couldn't provide for his mother, couldn't support her' (partner Jo). Jessica's husband, Frank 'resented her

spending so much time on school. She wasn't giving the amount of time she *should* have been spending *with* the family, *for* the family, not just doing jobs, just relaxing'.

Gina

...
felt down at the bottom of the priority heap. Ralph didn't want to know, didn't care about pleasing us, doing his best for us. He'd put headphones on, shut himself off, built a cocoon around himself.

As work encroached on family time, families became upset at losing quality time with the stressed parent. This involved extra emotional work, in what Hochschild (1997) refers to as the 'third shift', soothing children's and partners' feelings. Teachers who were mothers here spoke of spending additional time and emotional resources calming distressed children, as Celia well illustrates:

They were very confused by why Mummy was not working, why she kept crying. ... I tried not to think about them. It's too painful. I was too tired to relate to them nicely, grumpy, very cross. I wanted them to go to bed. I needed some space in the evenings. Children pick up these signals. That's when they have tantrums. They're more difficult when you're under stress, fight for your attention even more.

Family dynamics thus changed. Rachel, for example, having spent many years providing care for her troubled family, became more irritable and intolerant, 'less aware of me trying to do my best and more aware of what I wasn't doing' (daughter Hannah).

Families also experienced difficulty balancing the emotional needs of two professionals seeking simultaneous emotional support. 'When we were both under lots of pressure, that was bad news' (Celia). 'I wanted to let go of it [teacher stress] and so did she, two teachers living together. We were arguing more and more' (Alex). 'We both had an awful lot on our plates, working more and more with very little time for each other, neither of us in a position to support the other' (Stephen).

Conversations revealed a gender imbalance in emotional literacy within some homes (Neustatter, 2000), some males in this sample finding it harder to manage their female partner's stress emotions. Where both partners were employed full-time, couples experienced conflicts of interest. Like others in this sample, Alex and Paula's concepts of support provision were mismatched. Alex expected her to fill all emotional and domestic needs:

I was expecting her to be my Mum. She couldn't be. She knew things were going wrong but didn't know how to deal with it. I saw that as disloyalty. I remember saying to her: 'A job defines a man. It's important that I'm head of department by 40. I can't do with negativity. I can deal with it at work but I can't deal with it here. I need support'.

With the hindsight of counselling experiences, Alex has become aware his conventional ideas of gender role divisions led him to expect to receive unconditional emotional support from Paula without providing similar emotional input for her. This, together with spillover overload, contributed to the breakup of the relationship. 'What I couldn't face was that I hadn't put as much into the relationship and that's why I got left'.

Communication broke down, the straw that broke the camel's back. (Alicia)

Interviewees reported lowered levels of emotional literacy within the family impacting detrimentally on family health. Families experienced losses in emotional awareness. 'I wasn't too tuned in' (Ralph). 'A dear uncle died, Olivia's best friend died. Olivia had to carry her workload. She needed more support from me but I wasn't aware enough to give her that' (Edward). Patterns of decision-making altered. Edward 'wasn't contributing to family decisions. They'd decided themselves because I wasn't willing to join in. Then I argued with the decision. So I was alienating myself from the family'. Levels of empathy declined. 'I was feeling really uptight. Yet I couldn't talk to Andrew about it. When I did there was no sympathy' (Andrew's wife, Sarah). Ralph would ask his children how their day was, then not listen to their answers. 'The next three and a half hours, it was how was his day!' (daughter, Fiona).

Communication was viewed here as the most important emotional competency influencing family health. 'Gradually, you get out of the normal social communications to a much lower level' (Frank). 'The only time I managed to talk to him was in the car, because he'd come back in and work' (Gina). 'The boys started to disappear, tried to hide. You saw very little of them' (Stuart). Stress was transmitted indirectly by socially undermining communication patterns, 'displaying negative affect and negative evaluation of the person', commonly exhibited by stressed couples (Westman & Vonikur, 1998: 140), demonstrating the social nature of emotion. Partners were drawn into playing destructive emotional games, characterised by

conflictual interaction styles (Stewart and Joines, 1987). This was well illustrated by Andrew and Sarah's discussion of their spiralling distress:

Sarah: I was just so irritated. He was putting these barriers up, not sharing it with me

Andrew: Sometimes I'd get really angry. If I stormed out of the room, she might come after me. I'd keep going to the toilet. Lock the door!

Sarah: You were running away from interrogating. Tell me, tell me - nag, nag

Andrew: I didn't want to tell you. I had to get away. I couldn't just leave. When you live with someone, there's nowhere you can escape to.

Sarah: You were getting more and more angry. I was getting more and more frustrated, and therefore I was getting angry

Andrew: The more I denied there was anything wrong, the more you pumped me because there *was* something wrong. It was stalemate.

There were frequent crossed transactions, where couples held opposing aims in conversations (ibid). Some partners for example, adopted problem-solving approaches, opposing teachers' efforts to seek emotional support. Alicia for example, sought to further her understanding of events and processes, by questions such as 'Why didn't you do this?' while Terence wanted her to just listen.

While individual bodies are the sites for emotions, it is primarily family relationships that provide the context for managing emotion (Morgan, 1996). Family systems theory indicates there may be conflict between emotional expression rules (Scheff, 1990). Emotion rules were contested within some teachers' homes. As tensions grew, customary boundaries of emotion were disrupted. Matthew, Hector and Terence grew up in 'differentiated' families of origin, where emotional expression and open discussion was encouraged, while partners Rachel, Celia and Alicia, came from 'undifferentiated' families, where the expression of emotion was discouraged, disagreements signalling disloyalty (ibid). These discrepancies became more apparent as teacher stress colonized the home, leading to 'very interesting family dynamics, very explosive' (Celia).

The interpretation of emotional expression as a signal of distress was also gendered in some homes, emotional expression for males tending to be viewed as signaling physical illness. 'We thought he'd had a heart attack' (Fiona). For Celia, Charlotte and Margot, emotional expression was seen as a sign of mental distress, requiring psychiatric intervention. 'I was going up the wall. I remember Stuart saying at one stage when I was screaming, you need to see a psychiatrist. You really are ill, and I was' (Margot). As Hochschild (1997) says, women especially put a lot of emotional energy into becoming upset in an effort to make people listen. However, as Eichenbaum and Orbach (1983) point out, cultural rules mean this emotional signal usually turns others away.

It was mostly males who viewed the home as a safe arena for expressing emotion.

In the work environment I've never lost my temper. It transposed itself at home, a much more secure environment, freer. In the home environment, I don't have any problems. I will express anger, as will my family, but also express affection, care as well. ... You've got that security. (Terence)

Terence's wife Alicia, however, disagreed. Feeling unable to express her emotion in the home, cried on the way to her primary school. Providing a comfort zone for stressed teachers meant partners losing the home as an arena for emotional release. Jo, another primary teacher, stopped discussing 'school problems and burdens. It would just stress him out, seeing me getting stressed'. Pauline, protecting Marcus and colleagues, found herself without a support network:

I tried to suppress it, worrying about the effect it had on people. If I didn't, colleagues are not going to do their job as well ... I didn't feel able to bring my concerns home. I couldn't talk about it because Marcus was going through the same thing but worse than me. It'd only make it worse for him. He'd be worrying about me worrying.

Gina's 'safety valve' was

to dissolve into tears, my natural reaction. Ralph hates me crying. I mustn't let him know I'm crying. If he realised I'd got upset and cried, he'd have got ten times worse, blow his top quite literally.

Offloading their own stress tended to provoke rescue attempts from partners, as Marjorie explained:

I have to be careful I don't moan too much about college. If I start moaning, it's: 'We've got to get you out of there'. I think: 'Whoops! That's not necessarily what I want'. That's harping back to Gareth's school when he was not happy.

New emotion rules thus created situations where partners felt forced to repress emotion, increasing demands on their own emotion management, and feeding family burnout.

The Deterioration in Family Health

Stress 'crossover' (Bolger et al, 1989), 'where stress experienced in the workplace by an individual leads to stress being experienced by the individual's spouse at home' (Westman and Etzion, 1995: 169), was common in this sample. Ankrah (1991), studying the impact of HIV/AIDS on the home lives of families, found that family members experienced multidimensional burdens, overwhelming their psychological, emotional and spiritual needs. Positioning as unofficial health workers impacted negatively on these teachers' families. 'It affected Alicia quite a lot. She could see I was going downhill. I couldn't see what she could see' (Terence). Families experienced high emotional states, damage to family relationships, losses to family identity and burnout.

High emotional states

There were huge emotional struggles as families came to terms with loss, insecurity and uncertainty. 'Dad was not the person I knew' (Fiona). Ralph's family felt

'confused', not knowing 'what on earth we'd done wrong. We wondered what we could do to do the right thing. There wasn't an answer. Whatever we did, it would have been wrong' (Gina). Stuart felt 'powerless':

I could see the stress, could sympathise with it. I couldn't do much about it. I don't understand the school. The Headmaster knows all about it. They all know. What can I do? I can't tell the Headmaster how to run his school. ... It's round the proverbial mulberry bush, totally frustrating because it was out of my hands.

Pauline felt 'helpless'. Sarah became 'resentful', 'in despair' as Andrew, 'withdrawn and morose', withdrew into a cocoon she was unable to break through. Feeling traps ensued as powerlessness led to 'shame. It doesn't make me too successful does it?' (Stuart). Partners empathised with teachers' distress, experiencing their pain, stress directly transmissible through empathy. Sarah

was in a state of shock. Our life had been so turned around. I felt absolutely furious they had done this, horrified, angry. I wanted to go down that school and wring their necks. I shouted, swore, declared absolute war on those people. I'm still angry they can do this and get away with it.

Gareth's wife Marjorie, directing her anger towards government, wanted 'to write to the Secretary for Education ... who was going on about teachers who can't control'. Two years later, she still felt 'hurt', becoming tearful during the interview. The possible surfacing of negative emotion meant some partners refusing interviews. Maureen's husband Graham, who can be heard shouting 'bloody management' from

the next room during an interview, 'is a very sensitive person. What's happened to me over the last few years has been very painful for him, one of the reasons why he didn't want to be interviewed. He hasn't come to terms with himself, how it's affected me'.

Damaged family relationships

There was permanent damage to family relationships. Frank wondered 'whether it will ever go back. It's gone and that's it. Our daughter Janice is more distant from us than she would otherwise have been'. Teacher stress invaded the bedroom. Efforts to catch up with work disturbed partners' sleeping patterns, incurring sleep loss. 'Even if Ralph was in bed, he was reading well into the early hours. The light was on. I'm hopeless with late nights. I got to the point where I'd think: "I can't cope with this"' (Gina). Clinicians have linked problematic sexual functioning with emotional crises and major life stressors (Morokoff and Gilliland, 1993). Teachers and partners reported a loss of interest in sex, ascribed partly to exhaustion. 'It goes to zero' (Ralph) through 'sheer tiredness ... although we do bump together occasionally' (Ralph's wife, Gina). Margot described sex as 'an absolute nonsense. You couldn't have sex if you're so shattered. Your whole way of life was ruined. I'd be asleep at 6, 7 o'clock sometimes, wake up, then be asleep again, and sleep all night'. Frank felt 'there never seemed to be a long enough period so Jessica could settle down and become reasonably happy so we could relax a little bit'. Alicia 'lost any interest in sex. It was not important that Terence was impotent. He wasn't coming to bed ... I can't just jump into bed and have things hunky-dory'. The loss of sexual relations added to individuals' sense of bereavement.

We derive much of our sense of self through transactions with others (Woods, 1992). The loss of positive social transactions threatened family members' identity. Alicia, for example, saw Terence as performing a key role in defining her sense of self, acutely feeling the loss of his emotion work:

He's the one person I let my mask off with completely. I felt my batteries weren't being built up. I was trying to build myself up. Terence couldn't do that for me ... I was just not myself at all ... The whole thing had a catastrophic effect on my view of Terence, who he was or is. My world to some extent fell apart. This man had always been my brick wall. He'd always been the sort of person I looked up to.

Stuart keenly felt the loss of Margot's emotion work, which supported his sense of self. 'One of the attractions with her is she has a big personality of her own. I suppose that does me good. It keeps me in check. Else I tend to run away with things'.

Partners became estranged from their familiar selves, supporting evidence for identity as interpersonal. Ralph's children observed their mother, Gina, lose confidence describing her becoming 'a fidgety little mouse' who 'wasn't quite sure if she should belong here'. Capacities to give and receive affection changed. By withdrawing from family interactions, some teachers were unable to accept support from partners, who then experienced the loss of confidante and supporter roles as a threat to their identity. 'I felt terribly wounded and excluded' (Alicia).

If I'm upset, if I'm annoyed, I tell him. If I've a problem, I hope there's sympathy coming. Equally I want him to tell me so I can sympathise, but he wasn't telling me. I felt shut out. I thought: 'Why aren't you telling me? What am I here for if you're not telling me?' (Sarah)

Frank felt

there was a definite change in the way Jessica was able to express affection. She'd not want me to comfort her. Push me away. That's difficult to come to terms with. The natural reaction if somebody's feeling hurt, you cuddle them, show your support. If you're being pushed away, it changes it from a family situation to an acquaintance.

This increased feelings of depersonalisation. 'I grew more distant' (Frank).

Family burnout

Partners reported interpersonal tension and personal distress suggestive of family burnout. Teacher ill health added to levels of emotional exhaustion. 'I was coming home at lunchtimes from school to see if he was all right. If you're on your own all day, and you're not feeling well, it's a long day' (Ralph's wife, Gina). Gareth's wife Marjorie experienced difficulties concentrating on tasks to hand. 'I don't think I did as well in exams as I could have. The work was tough because of what was going on. I had to work harder as a result of it'. Gina, also a teacher, 'lost [her] sparkle', finding the experience influenced her own feelings of competency. 'I did get to the point of

absolutely sheer tiredness, exhaustion, and when you get like that you can't think straight'.

Depression was common. Ralph suggested Gina's depression 3 years previously was directly transmitted through 'management pressures' on him, 'the tension' he was experiencing conveyed through him on to her. Alex's partner, Paula, 'was getting more and more depressed'. Terence's wife, Alicia 'lost [her] sense of humour ... got depressed'. Edward's wife, Olivia was

feeling more stressed, on medication for depression for eighteen months. A number of times she's said she'd like to give up her job but she couldn't because I was having it even worse. 'However bad it is, I've got to keep working', she'd say. That added to the depression.

Rachel's whole family took medication for depression at some point during the downward spiral. She felt her daughter Hannah's depression was caused partly by her inability to provide support during her year's absence from school at a time when her daughter experienced multiple problems.

A burnout cycle evolved in some families where partner's burnout became another stressor for teachers, adding to their own burnout (Westman & Etzion, 1995). Terence's wife Alicia for example, highlighted the lack of support for stressed teachers and their families, comparing the isolation of stress with that of new parenthood:

It's like when you have a baby. Your world is upside down. You meet with a group who share the same things. How much better it feels for you to share. Yet in this scenario, there was no support, no-one to talk to, no-one to ask. It was hard all round.

Experiencing depersonalisation in the home, she developed work and leisure interests outside the family to feed her identity needs. Her teaching became 'all-encompassing'. Starting 'evening classes of various sorts', she 'was out of the house much more', only possible 'because Terence was looking after the children'. Her coping strategies included reducing negative emotion through maintaining an emotion mask. 'Quite good at being outwardly OK, but inwardly suffering', she repressed emotion, 'my coping-with mechanism to put this front up that everything was all right. ... I couldn't reach out to other people'. She avoided socialising, aware she'd 'have to put [her] mask on when with other people', which added to feelings of exhaustion. These strategies fed into already damaged family relationships with both Terence and the children, who felt bereft of her support.

An exploration of teacher stress and family emotion thus shows that emotion in the family is a social and cultural phenomenon. Family systems here became the holding environments for stress emotion from multiple sites, where individual workers, partners, children and elders compete in emotion work markets. The familial sphere was not a refuge but a site of emotional trauma. Emotion from family and working spheres collided, increasing vulnerability to stress-related illness both for teachers and for their families.

There was much work involved in dealing with stress-related illness. In the next chapter I consider family and organisational responses to the management of the illness trajectory.

CHAPTER 6. 'ON THE EDGE': TRAJECTORY (MIS)MANAGEMENT

Trajectory management entails organising therapeutic action (Corbin and Strauss, 1988). This is a social process where individuals, spouses, parents, children, social networks, medical personnel and counsellors employ strategies shaping the downward spiral, stabilisation and processes of re-alignment (Strauss et al, 1985). Creating the conditions for recovery necessitates comfort work (relief from physical pain), clinical work (diagnostic searches, technical assistance), biographical work (coming to terms with changes in the body and body perceptions, adjusting to changed biographies), identity work (dealing with lost aspects of the self, finding new conceptions), and sentimental work (relief from emotional pain, providing support and reassurance, building trust, creating opportunities for positive emotional experiences) (ibid). Variability in outcome is determined not only by the nature of the illness and individual physical and emotional responses, but also by the management schemes instituted. One area omitted by Corbin and Strauss (1988), due to their emphasis on families, is the role of working organisations on trajectory processes. For my teachers, working organisations were key influences shaping the trajectory course, from the onset, through unstable and acute phases to self-renewal processes (see chapter 7).

Interventions in the downward spiral were perceived as largely detrimental to therapeutic outcomes, causing further deterioration in health. Key themes were failures in early detection and therapeutic action, problems with long-term use of emotion-focused coping strategies, and breaches in statutory duties of care.

Factors Hindering Early Detection and Therapeutic Action

Peter Pyranty of the charity Stress at Work described teachers he sees as 'wrecked. Physically and emotionally in a severe state ... I don't think I could make that generalization about any other profession. By the time teachers come to Stress at Work, a significant proportion are very severely damaged' (personal communication). Early detection and therapeutic action was hampered by low levels of individual, familial, and organisational emotional awareness, and by the influence of individualistic stress discourses.

Emotional awareness

I didn't realise I was suffering stress, put it down to problems with hearing
I was knotted. The war around me prevented me seeing the knots. I didn't realise I was getting into trouble. (William)

Emotional awareness involves recognizing and understanding our own and others' feelings, their effects, their strengths and limitations, and using these to guide decision-making (Klein, 1997). Teachers' testimony revealed low levels of individual awareness of stress emotions. Gareth 'wasn't aware of an inner rage. I'd come home angry. Couldn't say where I was directing my anger'. Margot 'hadn't thought about [her]self for a year, what's happening in [her] body, what's happening in [her] mind'. 'Now I know I've been really ill, how close I came to really burning out, going wacko' (Charlotte).

Familiarity and lack of knowledge of stress-related illness reduced families' capacities to see early signs. Lindsey, William's wife was 'with him all the time and didn't notice. Good friends came round. They saw how bad he was, how he'd altered'. 'The only sign was he'd come home from work more tight in himself, more miserable, something deep going on. I knew he was fed up, really annoyed, but I didn't know he was getting ill' (Sarah, Andrew's wife).

Teachers here felt teaching communities had lost their capacity for reflexivity, their 'social radar', displaying 'empathy avoidance', and becoming 'tone deaf' to emotional signals (Goleman, 1998). 'Everybody's chasing their tail' (Jonathon). 'No-one noticed the little messes I get into. They're so absorbed in their own crises, they haven't time to notice my little crises' (Charlotte). Ralph felt 'they're so submerged in work they don't have time to see what's happening to other people until something goes wrong, something snaps, a member is taken ill, or hits a kid because they've finally lost their rag'.

The slow deterioration in health hindered early identification and diagnosis. 'It creeps up by increment' (Ralph). 'It was a slow process. When it reached crisis point, on reflection, I look back over probably two or three years, it's not been right' (Alicia). According to Lazarus and Lazarus (1994: 296), people 'would rather not know the truth since [the truth] violates our cherished views of who we are and what we are like'. Teacher narratives showed this was partially true (see chapter 3). However, it is usually not until the body is over-exerted that people are forced to stop long enough to notice (Corbin and Strauss, 1988). Teachers testified that they, their families and colleagues were slow to recognise the severity of signals of distress until acute bodily failure compelled action. Fassel's (1992: 98) use of metaphor illustrates the insidious effects of

accumulating stressors: 'If a frog is dropped into boiling water, it will leap out immediately. If dropped into cold water, and the water heated up to boiling point, it will remain there until it dies ... The longer the pot heats up (the addiction continues), the more unlikely it is that we have the needed resources (presence of mind) to jump out'.

According to Bulan et al (1997), the level of self-monitoring is one of the greatest influences on emotional well-being. However, recognising stress, the 'first stage in effective stress management' (Crawford, 1997: 103) is both an individual and a social process. This first stage was largely absent at both individual and collective levels. 'Unfortunately [recognition] tends to come too late. People have actually jumped off the cliff before they've got support' (Jonathon).

Individualistic stress discourses

It seemed to affect a lot of women [teachers] I knew, very strong people. I started to wonder if it was their age, but up until that point I hadn't believed it was stress. I thought it was some other weakness in them. (Margot)

Individualised stress discourses permeated narratives. For these teachers, their families and colleagues, beliefs about stress signalling personal frailty were key factors hindering effective therapeutic action and apportioning blame. 'It's mostly people who're weak. If you're strong, you can chill it out' (Charlotte). Alex 'was letting [his] partner down. She saw this as weakness'. 'If something goes wrong, I usually think it's my fault' (Luke). Celia felt she'd 'failed completely. My life was in tatters'. Much stress discourse engenders the belief that only certain personality types suffer stress-

related problems. '[Colleagues] said, "We'd never have thought you'd be like that. We didn't think that was your personality"' (Luke). Rebecca 'didn't feel depressed. I felt it was external, didn't feel it came from within me. I don't think I'm a depressive character'.

Celia, Charlotte, Emily, Maureen and Rachel felt 'women's troubles' were a common 'masking element' (Celia), directing emphasis away from an early accurate diagnosis of stress-related illness. For example, both Celia and her GP interpreted the changes in her bodily experiences as having a hormonal basis. 'I thought it was just PMT, the anxiety, the fluid retention. I was very irritable for several months'. Her doctor prescribed 'Prozac, two weeks before my period'. Celia, like other women in this sample, tried 'alternative therapies, the well woman clinic, evening primrose oil. I was just in the midst of trying all of these different therapies when I broke down and had to sign off for six weeks. It was obvious that this was a forerunner of depression'. Charlotte experienced her anaemia as a physical symptom of emotional trauma within the workplace:

The place [was] draining my life's blood, heavy periods, constant periods, because I was stressed. I reckon they were taking my life's blood and it was happening to me physically. Once I stopped [work] it stopped happening physically. Because I'm not losing so much, I've got all my iron back. I haven't got those dark rings under my eyes.

Diagnosis involves biographical work, an accurate analysis of present and past, plus 'an imagery of sequences of potential events and anticipatable actions' (Strauss et al, 1985: 21). Teachers withheld information, 'not being prepared to admit to doctors it was

stress-related' (Ralph). 'I pulled the wool over my doctor's eyes' (Celia). GP's were reported as mostly unable to perform their work effectively, such as assessing the severity of illness and rate of development, or considering appropriate therapeutic options. Teachers feared disclosure staining their reputations. This was well illustrated by Jessica.

If stress were on my record, the chances of me getting out would disappear. I wanted a clean bill of health. My doctor wanted me to take tranquillizers. I utterly refused. He asked me to see a counsellor. I had one meeting. He couldn't do anything for me because I was so anti-counselling. I was 100 per cent determined I wasn't going through anything that someone could say: 'Oh. She's had to take tranquillizers, had to have counselling because she couldn't cope'. I didn't want it written in my notes, didn't want anyone thinking I couldn't hold down another job. I was absolutely paranoid about it, didn't want anything to put a fly in the ointment.

The emotional labour involved in concealing negative feelings and managing the self fed into increases in exhaustion.

Stress was thus not viewed as a feature of modern life but as individual weakness, a sign of vulnerability, associated with incompetency. Concealment reduced help-seeking, increased energy expenditure, and further reduced emotional awareness and perceived levels of competence. In the absence of effective organisational strategies, teachers here turned to emotion-focused options to reduce the impact of distress on daily life.

An 'Immaculate Concealment': The Adoption of Emotion-focused Coping Strategies

No-one knew I'd got a problem. I hid it well, an immaculate concealment.

There was no way anybody seemed to recognise it. (Luke)

Eisler & Blalock (1991: 49) define individual coping as 'the process through which the person manages the demands of the person-environment interactions and the emotions generated by them'. Emotion-focused coping strategies manage the emotional consequences of stress through mechanisms temporarily promoting positive emotion. They alter the focus of individual attention or change the meaning of situations (Altmaier, 1995). According to Freudenberger and Richelson, (1980: 104), individuals experiencing burnout, 'governed by the work ethic ... unwittingly select a cure ... which intensifies the burnout, spreading it faster and further'. The adoption of emotion-focused measures may be protective in the short term. However, when perceived stressor controllability is low, they often become maladaptive (Bowman & Stern, 1995). Issues of autonomy and control were high on these teachers' agendas (see chapters 3 and 4). Most of my teachers used such coping strategies for lengthy periods, during which the nature of their distress was disguised. Of most importance within teachers' testimonies were individual 'stress-busting' techniques, palliative measures, and emotional estrangement.

Individual 'stress-busting' techniques

Literature on 'stress-busting' encourages individuals to monitor stress levels and to resolve stress-related issues through the development of their own coping techniques,

for example, Greener (1996) and Patmore (1997). Teachers in this sample felt schools had little knowledge and awareness of preventive organisational approaches to stress. For example, they reported schools as slow to follow the lead of industry in protecting employees through formal employee assistance programmes, and performing stress audits.

Commonly ascribed stress management techniques were used to some extent by all interviewees. Maureen, for example, who was proactive regarding stress reduction, explored relaxation techniques, diet, boosting the immune system, vitamins, monitoring cholesterol levels, yoga, meditation, and breathing exercises. She found them initially helpful. Finding directed time for exercise was an added stressor, so she walked to school. Visualisation exercises reduced stressful social transactions.

I took my mind off for a fleeting second. That brought me into a calm state again. I got exceptionally good at that. I had my pebble, like the Eskimo worry stone. I visualised my pebble in any situation I felt I couldn't control.

Anticipatory cognitive strategies helped combat negative thinking:

It was very difficult to stop thinking ahead in negative ways. I tried to redress the balance, visualising the worse thing that could happen about things I was frightened of, and form a strategy for how I was going to cope.

Investigating stress, stress management and time management increased knowledge of stress discourses and emotional self-awareness:

It made me feel less guilty. I could see some things I was blaming myself for weren't my responsibility. It didn't make the situation any better in changing it to make it easier for me, but it made it easier for me to see that some things I felt were going badly wrong, I'd got no control over.

However, in the long term, personal stress management techniques proved ineffective for these teachers, with a continued mismatch between resources and situational demands. Maureen for instance, 'tried non-invasive, non-medication ways to keep blood pressure within bounds. For a while they could. I coped quite well, but as life got more tricky, it wasn't enough, because I started on tablets, and the tablets didn't work'. Stephen 'knew procedures to cope with stress – relaxation tapes, meditation. I found I wasn't able to do that, and do the job as well. The two wouldn't sit well together'. Seeking practical help with organisational issues, he attended assertiveness training, suggested by his counsellor. 'It was the wrong sort of course. What it went through I already knew. If I was feeling well, I'd put it into practice, but when things are on top of you, self-confidence is at an all-time low. There's no way you're going to be assertive'.

Optimal organisational performance requires the adoption of strategic interventions to care for employee health (Hopkins, 1997). Individual counselling is one option offered, for example, by Teacherline. According to the Foundation of Occupational and Mental Health, (1998), 'individual stress counselling can be a very cost effective part of a company's staff care programme'. By investing in outside counselling, employers a) free their own staff from involvement in a task for which they are usually unqualified, b) provide employees with a safe environment where they may speak freely without the attendant risks of fear of disclosure and stigma jeopardising career prospects, and c)

enhance individual and collective awareness and development contributing to a healthier emotional climate and the earlier recognition of signs of stress. Access to counselling was available to teachers during the downward spiral through informal and formal channels - privately (Rachel and Celia), GP's (William, Ralph, Andrew, Jessica and Rebecca), and schools (Emily and Stephen). Whether counselling proved beneficial depended on degrees of fit between types of counselling, and perceived needs in particular phases of illness trajectories (see chapter 7). While Rebecca's local surgery counsellor 'was very good, he didn't understand teaching and schools'. Her union representative arranged counselling with local authority services:

He was brilliant, really helpful. An ex-teacher, he understood without me having to explain, the rowdyism, the background, the pressures, the sense of responsibility you feel for children, the things that come up in schools, and how the job has altered in the last few years.

For Stephen and Emily, counselling did not provide skills that mitigated the stress experience. Stephen voluntarily attended sessions with a local counselling organisation. He was alone in this sample in resisting psychoanalytical exploration of historical 'baggage', 'looking at childhood and various influences I didn't feel were at all relevant'. Stephen abandoned counselling, feeling organisational issues were not addressed, his health not improving. Emily's counselling, on the other hand, focusing solely on the workplace, for example improving communication with colleagues, 'wasn't what [she] was after. I wanted to talk about relationships and feelings. The counsellor didn't want to talk about relationships and feelings at all' (Emily). For Emily and Stephen, the counselling experience proved ineffective, emotional and technical challenge counterproductive, increasing feelings of incompetency and failure.

‘My emotional state was not ideal for coping with that sort of challenge’ (Emily). ‘I didn’t feel it was helping at all. I just wasn’t feeling any better about myself, or what I was doing ... It fuelled the failing part of it’ (Stephen).

Teachers felt individualised stress management, failing to tackle core perceived organisational causes of stress-related illness, ‘miss the point. They need time and motion studies’ (Sally). They proved inadequate in protecting teachers from long-term risks to health, and feeding feelings of failure.

Palliative measures

Palliative strategies, such as smoking, overeating, and alcohol consumption, give immediate relief, lessening pain temporarily. Teachers reported a decrease in positive health behaviours and an increase in negative health behaviours threatening well-being. Dietary patterns altered. Consumption of ‘comfort’ foods increased. Marcus ‘used to eat a meal in the canteen. I stopped going. Take sandwiches to the staffroom. Then I started coming home, eat a tin of soup, cuppa-soup, sometimes a sandwich, a packet of crisps’. Weight loss was common. Ralph was ‘eating 30 per cent less than normal, but using up more energy, racing around all over the place’. Dehydration ensued as breaks were consumed by teaching tasks, distressed students, administration and meetings. ‘There was no time even to have coffee’ (Sally). ‘I’d come home, have 5 or 6 large mugs of tea’ (Ralph).

Margot and Charlotte resumed dependence on nicotine. ‘I’d stopped smoking for five years, started smoking small cigars, only five a day. It’s a stress factor, a release’

(Margot). Charlotte's coping mechanisms from her youth, amphetamines, helped 'control feelings':

I wasn't getting support when I needed it most. I felt I was losing my mind. It took me back twenty years. I thought: 'What the hell are you doing?' I'd have lost my job if I'd carried on. That was scary.

Alcohol dependence was widespread, giving rise to other symptoms such as disturbed sleep patterns. Rachel coped with 'large whiskies'. Rebecca 'leant on cider. It was cheap, a two-litre bottle in an evening. I've quite a tolerance but it seemed to take more and more to unwind enough to sleep, and keep asleep'. Andrew recalled 'drinking throughout' the Christmas vacation before his breakdown. Luke spent weekends drinking. 'It was bizarre at the time. We'd start drinking on Saturday afternoon. Get up Sunday afternoon. I couldn't remember anything of that night'.

Self-medication was common. For Ralph, Emily and William, for example, painkillers for repeated headaches/migraine led to dependency on 'paracetamol' (Ralph), 'aspirin, in my briefcase, in the car' (William). Emily 'took travel sickness pills first so I didn't throw up the painkillers. If you want to keep going, it's not easy, because you get a bit stupid with travel sickness pills. You can't drive'. Margot, Maureen, Celia, Alex, Luke and Emily explored alternative therapies such as evening primrose oil, aromatherapy and homeopathy.

Rising numbers of teachers use prescribed medication to survive the stress of everyday life, around one in ten primary headteachers reportedly taking tranquillizers or anti-depressants (Passmore, 1997). Terence, Gareth, Emily and Maureen were prescribed

blood pressure tablets, betablockers such as Inderal, to reduce anxiety. 'They alleviated confrontations, made me more laid back' (Emily). General practitioners prescribed tranquillisers and anti-depressants (Dothiepin, Amytryptiline, Prozac, Fluoxetine, Proxamol, Mogadon) to manage 'anxiety', 'stress-related reactive depression' and 'neurasthenia'.

According to the medical model, emotional imbalance occurs when the chemical balance of neurotransmitters is undermined. Equilibrium, and thus emotional health, is restored by artificially altering this balance. Interviewees, however, felt that tranquilliser use, rather than reducing distress, increased emotional disequilibrium, adding to losses in self-awareness, reducing feelings of competency, and increasing feelings of fatigue and depersonalisation, reducing signals to the self, and feelings of control. Rebecca felt

everything was woozy, clouded, like tunnel vision. You're in that cocoon, very unlike myself. I didn't recognise any of the feelings. It was masking, dulled all my senses down, hearing, feeling. I was barely operating, very artificial Mogadon levels, terrible ... I'd rather be in control and it hurting a bit. That's vital to me'.

Medication reduced the capacity to question and problem-solve. 'I'd got to sort through what had to be sorted, be in touch with it. I felt very out of touch with it' (Rebecca). Medication distanced teachers from students and colleagues, making them 'more detached, less emotionally involved, more laid back, less whizzy, more inclined to let things ride' (Celia). There were 'terrible side-effects, hangovers, half the next day wiped out' (Jonathon). Alex 'couldn't function, chemically I was just out with it'.

Charlotte had difficulty staying awake. 'I call them dopey-athis tablets 'cos that's what they make me!' Teachers felt medication did little to control or cure symptoms. Rebecca's panic attacks for example, 'continued. It didn't stop the dreams and the re-enactments'.

Teachers here used medication to facilitate a return to work, often in opposition to doctors' advice. Maintaining a teaching career while taking such medication was 'hard work. I felt slow in the mornings, the sedative effect. Needed to get up earlier, have coffee. I was OK to drive because I wasn't taking a very large dosage but nevertheless I had to be aware I was on it' (Celia). Rebecca found work 'very much more difficult ... numbed, in incredibly slow motion'. Medication 'masked' the nature of stressors, giving the illusion of coping. The signal function was lost, impairing levels of self-awareness, creativity, energy, and classroom performance, and precipitating crisis. Celia for example, found

Prozac no good at all, too much of a high. I was even more anxious than before, pretty manic, rushing around. It was masking the fact that I was still gradually crumbling inside. I couldn't see it. Getting tired, and tired. I thought I was coping well but I was too fast, too energetic, too anxious, cramming a lot of activities into each day, rushing around manically and feeling incompetent ... until it all fell to pieces, and I just had to stop. My poor little self couldn't cope any more!

Palliative strategies worsened health in the long term through inhibiting the development of problem-focused and anticipatory coping strategies, involving confronting, planning, information seeking and problem resolution, and mobilising

preventative schema. As in Cooperstock (1976), tranquillisers enabled individuals to maintain difficult or intolerable roles without dealing with the underlying causes. Celia 'had to rush around to do one and a half people's job. It did make me able to do the job better. I could fit more in, but it wasn't good for me'. Teachers' resistance and unhappiness was pathologised. For some, medication became a 'cerebral cosh' (Carlyle, 1993), a form of social control, locking them into problematic situations through its 'chemical curtain' (Hansen, 1986: 166). 'It was a physical way of making you not affected by the outside world' (Charlotte).

Emotional estrangement

Stress was building up, building up. I built pretty good walls, a cocoon, to protect myself from all the stresses and strains, isolating myself off so I could keep going. Eventually the walls were so blooming good, nothing could get through! I found myself losing it. (William)

The use of defence mechanisms is common when problems are perceived as outside personal control (Folkman, 1997). However, as Hochschild, (1983: 29) points out, 'emotion, like seeing or hearing, is a way of knowing about the world'. For this sample, that way of knowing was lost, with detrimental consequences in the capacity to feel, and the degree with which individuals were conscious of their own, and others', feelings.

Teachers spoke of managing emotion from school through denial. 'Something like stress, you shelve it under the carpet' (Charlotte).

Stressed? Me? I'm not stressed. You go into denial straight away. One of the biggest failings individuals make - they try and convince themselves they're not suffering stress. I shrugged it off. Whatever happens I can cope. (Ralph)

Displacement was common. Luke's negative emotion, for example, emerged in his music:

The year I was trying to mend, my release wasn't a good release. I was out performing in the week, till 2/3 o'clock in the morning, getting up and going to work at seven. It's just a cacophony, a big angry noise. It was all very just on the edge, so much negativeness, hostility, so self-destructive. I couldn't carry on like that.

Interviewees distanced themselves, Andrew unable to 'let anyone help. It was *my* problem'. Others avoided the stress 'virus' by withdrawing from socialising with colleagues.

The school atmosphere got me down, the noise, lack of discipline. I started coming home lunchtimes. You'd spend lunchtime moaning about kids. The fact that other people had the same problems didn't help. It depressed me to think this was the atmosphere everyone was working under. (Marcus)

Such defence mechanisms are not merely individual choices, but part of ongoing social transactions and the affective requirements of the teaching experience. The affective requirements of service sector employment refer to 'organisationally imposed rules

requiring specific facial and bodily displays', prescribing occupationally relevant behaviour (Bulan et al, 1997: 237). Jonathon, for example, spoke of

people's expectations of me. They expect me to work hard. They expect me to smile all the time, to run around doing jobs, to introduce new initiatives, to get involved with this, that, the other, to say: 'Yes' to anyone.

Teachers reported perceptions of the affective requirements of teaching as altering post-educational reform. They believed emotion management was now dictated by direct and indirect managerial supervision, and increased external controls over working lives. Celia for example,

wasn't feeling I could be me. I was trying to be me in the classroom, but it wasn't popular with management. The sort of teacher that's wanted - someone who toes the party line, I've never fitted that mould, always been a bit of a maverick, too individual, a free spirit. I tried hard but that's very emotionally draining.

This heightened feelings of inauthenticity, and increased risks of emotional estrangement, perceived as a direct consequence of changed affective requirements in teaching. These teachers and their families spoke of donning an emotional mask to hide true feelings. 'Terence's quite good at putting a mask on. He just shut off' (Alicia). During that year, Andrew 'didn't enjoy teaching'. He was

coming home, thinking: 'I've got through that day. Nothing's happened. I'm okay for another day'. I was going through the motions, acting at work as well

as home. I put on as vague a face as possible. In school I was as miserable as sin, still trying to make silly jokes, smile. Particular girls saw through me: 'What's the matter, Sir? There's something wrong!'

One of the consequences of 'deep acting' is the risk of 'losing the signal function of feeling' (Hochschild, 1983: 21). Communication with the emotional self was damaged. Inactivity or rest periods were avoided. Edward filled his time 'with routine, to avoid having to feel about it'. Luke experienced

down times where I wasn't doing anything, just sit there doing nothing. I wasn't comfortable to just sit there by myself, because, when I sat there myself, suddenly: Whooo! I realised it was just a big front I was living through.

Much emotional energy was consumed repressing emotion. Andrew 'bottled it up for so long'. Jonathon's 'lows follow the highs, so you can't always afford yourself the highs'. Emotional labour was 'draining energy a lot, so you hadn't got the energy to rejuvenate yourself to keep going, and in teaching you do need to rejuvenate' (William). Emotional estrangement followed as teachers detached themselves from their own feelings, and from threatening emotional transactions. At some point in the downward spiral, all teachers in this sample described withdrawing within a protective cocoon. Cocooning refers to 'a bracketing, on the level of practice, of possible events which could threaten the bodily or psychological integrity of the agent' (Giddens, 1991: 40). Stephen 'withdrew completely inside [his] shell'. Edward put his mind

as much as possible into neutral, not letting highs and lows impinge, trying to avoid the lows by cutting out the highs, switching off the emotions, a sort of detachment, as a defence mechanism, because if you did let the things that happen in school get to you, either the highs or the lows, then it would have painful repercussions. If you experience the highs then you've got to experience the lows as well and they both hurt too much. I gradually became more and more disaffected from everything to do with school, and perhaps to avoid further disappointment, I didn't get involved enough to cause disappointment. I became so detached I wasn't making a positive contribution at all by the end.

Teachers lost touch with their real feelings and their ability to 'be themselves'. William was 'like a ship. The engine's broken down, steering's gone, drifting around, not knowing what direction I was going in, not focusing on any problems I was having. It deadens your sensitivity. It was a nothingness time, limbo'.

While recourse to emotion-focused strategies temporarily mitigated the effects of stress, in the long term, they proved maladaptive, heightening burnout, hindering early identification of stress-related illness and reducing emotional self-awareness. This research suggests that teachers' use of emotion-focused coping strategies was partly due to the emotional climate and organisational culture of their educational institution. One of the key ways of gaining insight, to reappraise personal, collective and organisational meanings, is to talk with trusted others. Individual and collective 'cocooning' strategies precluded open discussion, reducing the experience of emotionality, inhibiting the recognition and understanding of feelings in both the self and others, thus reducing levels of emotional awareness and empathy. Coping failure

was linked to job involvement and reduced levels of awareness, autonomy and control. As Siedman & Zager (1991: 213) conclude, 'without gaining a sense of control over their jobs, schoolteachers seem doomed to a devastating plethora of physical, psychological, and social problems which will only worsen their teaching situations (creating a 'vicious circle')'. Emotional estrangement reduced key teacher competencies, teachers here unable to self-monitor, with subsequent limitations on secondary appraisal and re-appraisal. Avoidance coping became entrenched, leading to coping failure, and compounding work-related stress.

Breaches in Duty of Care: Organisational Strategies Increasing Health Risks

If you've paid lots of money to train someone, and you employ that person, you've a duty of care to make sure that person actually survives and does the job, and if they're failing in any area, a duty of care to identify that failure, and try and support them. (Jonathon)

All employers have a duty to protect employees from exposure to physical and mental risks in the course of their work (Shillaker, 1997), MHSW Regulations requiring employers to:

- make themselves aware, through current literature, of the sources of stress at work, and how these may be affecting their own organisation;
- assess the risks to the mental health of their workforce (and of others who may be affected by the organisation's activities);
- make arrangements for putting into practice the necessary preventive and protective measures;

- carry out, where appropriate, a health surveillance;
- give adequate information and training about risks.

(Earnshaw and Cooper, 1996: 53)

Teacher health was further impaired by the consequences of perceived breaches in the duty of care within schools. Schools here were often aware of these teachers' difficulties and vulnerable health, medical certificates, for example, citing 'depression and anxiety' (Rebecca, Andrew and Stephen), 'neurasthenia' (Celia), 'stress' (Ralph). Terence's visits to the diabetic clinic had noticeably increased. Sally had two weeks off after her father's death. However, teachers perceived school strategies as impacting negatively on the course of illness trajectories, impeding stabilisation and recovery, and in some cases, actively contributing to complete emotional breakdown.

Teachers spoke of increased vulnerability to stress-related illness and psychological damage through schools' lack of awareness and knowledge of stress and stress-related illness (see above), failure in duties to protect from further harm through providing preventive and protective measures, failure to provide supportive environments, and actively worsening emotional trauma through insensitive handling of professional supports and disciplinary action surrounding issues of competency.

Failure to protect from further harm

According to Palmer (1996), many employers do not take stress seriously. A main outcome of the John Walker versus Northumberland County Council case (1994) was that employers hold liability when levels of anxiety and stress are due solely to work-related stress and not to personal issues. However, as chapter 5 shows, it is no easy task

to separate cause and effect. Teachers felt there was little understanding of interactions between biographies, home and school (Rice, 1984). Teachers' analyses of the home/work interface, demonstrate the interdependence of spheres. 'Clearly my stress was work-related and obviously the relationship affected my work' (Alex).

I've only ever seen all things that happened to me come together as one. I've never sat down and worked out whether there was something wrong in my marriage before there was stress at school, or if there was stress at school and therefore something wrong with my marriage. They all sort of evolved together. (Margot)

While all schools must take 'reasonable steps' to protect their staff from 'foreseeable harm' (Shillaker, 1997: 26), when some of these teachers advised school of stress-related problems, they reported management responses as further increasing distress, as the experiences of Terence, Luke, Jessica, and Rebecca illustrate.

Terence, under the strain of work abuse (see chapter 4), felt his teaching 'was suffering. I was feeling exceedingly frustrated. I knew the job I was doing wasn't good enough, but it was as good as anybody could do, given the circumstances'. According to Terence, his headteacher refused to acknowledge his illness as work-related. Terence's testimony revealed elements of ongoing (neglectful) abuse (Wyatt and Hare, 1997).
Terence's headteacher

would say: 'All administrations your responsibility'. I'd say: 'Fine. I accept that, but I cannot do it alone. I've got to have some non-teaching staff to assist

in all this work'. His answer was: 'You're paid to do this job. You do it'. That made me so angry.

A complete emotional breakdown followed. Terence felt his protests were subsequently acknowledged through management action. 'I was never replaced by one person. One person couldn't do my job. They gave other senior teachers different parts of my role and appointed a bursar, without a teaching commitment'.

Teachers reported schools as not resolving conflicts justly, termed 'denial of due process' (Wyatt and Hare, 1997). Grievance procedures are one way of handling conflicts. Teachers described grievance proceedings as extremely emotionally distressing. Luke, for instance, on accepting a new post, found himself drawn into a battle between his local authority and his Head:

It was quite draining. I thought I'd got a promotion. When I got there, it wasn't. I went to County, unions involved, school, local authority. A hearing came out in my favour. [Management] said: 'Oh yes, it's in your favour, but we aren't in a position to be able to pay your allowance'. So I was very unsettled, really angry with the Head, the Governor, felt I'd been mistreated and lied to, a real conflict. Just starting at the school, I didn't want a big fight with them. I was in this political minefield, being pulled into a political battle that wasn't mine between the LEA and the headmaster, used as ammunition against the Head.

Teachers reported expertise in handling relationships as low. Jessica's case (see chapter 4) illustrates how internal grievance procedures can be ineffective. Her grievances were

upheld at a meeting with Donald, her Head, with her union representative taking minutes. 'It was agreed I would use my professional judgement on what I did during my lessons'. However, abuse continued resulting in another attempt at conflict resolution. 'I had to put it in writing. Patricia and I had to discuss the contents with Donald, the two of us plus him'. This face-to-face confrontation was traumatic. 'I was in a hell of a state. I didn't expect it to go that far. I was shaking by the time I'd finished. I was not prepared to keep on being blackmailed into doing what my head of department wanted me to do'. Jessica's exam classes, sixth form residential and work experience responsibilities were reinstated. Again, the abuse continued. Eventually Jessica 'couldn't face this woman and her comments any more, or any more of the treatment she was going to hand out'. For several years, she felt management action contributed to ongoing emotional trauma, failing to protect her from further harm. 'Donald theoretically agreed with me, supported me, but continued to let the situation go on'. Jessica's school became subject to widely publicised local investigations, three of her colleagues lodging constructive dismissal claims against their county council for persistent bullying by management (Mansell, 2000).

Palmer (1996) recommends that employees experiencing violence at work be treated with due care, further risks minimised. Rebecca's school did not take steps to prevent her suffering further sexual harassment (see chapter 4). Returning to school, Rebecca found the perpetrator had been 'suspended for a couple of days', then placed in isolation in the corridor outside the staffroom. Managing the emotional demands of daily encounters increased emotional trauma:

I hated when I had to see him. It's as if he got away with it, which he essentially did ... Wherever I went, I had to go through where he was in

isolation, which affected me very badly. I tried to take long routes to avoid seeing him, losing half of break going across the school. It sounds ridiculous but it really upset me every time I saw him.

In a closed community where such problems were not discussed openly, responses from the children were outside her and school control:

There was quite a lot of speculation. That made me feel terrible, to be assaulted, and open to speculation. I was very afraid of it coming out, me being known as the middle-aged teacher who had been groped by a boy. It's a horrible thing. That was a real worry.

A second incident occurred soon after Rebecca's return:

The children came in nudging, shoving, and giggling. I said, 'If anyone would like me to proofread your work, bring it out'. A boy came up voluntarily, threw his book down on the table. It was full of obscenities about rogering, rape, male rape, from top to bottom. As I read it, I could feel my face get really red. I thought I was going to burst into tears. They were all watching me, the other kids on the table, all watching my reaction.

In the staffroom, Rebecca 'burst into tears. I lost it, just flipped over'. Her Head did not deal the emotions caused by this incident. In a dangerous emotional state, Rebecca was told to drive home and see her doctor. This incident triggered complete emotional breakdown and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Failing support systems

The importance of social support systems to well-being and recovery from stress-related illness is well documented (Pines et al 1981; Buyssen 1996). Social support is an importance organisational competence which not only 'moderates the impact of stressors on well-being', but also influences 'the appraisal of environmental demands as stressful' (Griffith, Steptoe and Cropley, 1999: 517). Central functions of social support systems include:

- Active listening: of a non-judgemental character, indicating both interest and understanding, and with-holding advice;
- Technical appreciation: competencies are affirmed, good work acknowledged and appreciated, with integrity and honesty;
- Technical challenge: critical 'friends' and colleagues who encourage and stretch, avoiding boredom and stagnation;
- Emotional support: where friends and colleagues provide unconditional care;
- Emotional challenge: where friends and colleagues question motives and excuses within a trusting relationship, seeing the wood for the trees at times when emotional turmoil limits rationality. (Pines et al, 1981: 124-129)

While the creative use of social support systems provides an effective mechanism in both the prevention and the management of burnout, most organisations, for a variety

of reasons, do not make full use of this valuable resource (ibid). Teachers here reported schools as having low levels of informal and formal support provision. Charlotte for example, perceived a general lack of 'care', in

how people were being treated. People were going off sick, nobody bothering to write to them. I wanted people to know. I wanted to be able to say: 'What do we do about it?' It alarmed me that people didn't. When Dora was having problems, I was saying: 'Look, we ought to be helping'. In the end they didn't care. She went. I thought: 'Oh my god! People don't care!' That was awful.

However, it was not that colleagues simply did not care. Support systems deteriorated under the pressures of educational reform, the education system today viewed as less able to provide support. 'The way the system's going at the moment, people like myself, would've been chucked on the scrap heap' (Luke). Jonathon, Margot, Yvonne, Alex, and Andrew described the 'us and them' culture in Walton Green. Technical appreciation was absent. 'We don't know how to say "well done" to staff' (Margot). None of the schools involved here had formal stress policies, leaflets on stress placed in pigeon-holes (Charlotte), or pay-slips (Stephen). Preventive measures to increase awareness, assess risks, monitor and manage stress were largely absent. 'The pro-active management of stress, which is supposed to be there, an authority-wide programme, is not being implemented, not enough resources, not enough people' (Ralph).

Effective support systems need highly skilled personnel with directed time to perform emotion work. For example, Rebecca felt her acting Head had little expertise in effectively managing a potentially litigious situation:

It was the system, very difficult to handle, to know how to approach it, how to tackle the boy, how to get the information. He didn't need this any more than I did. He had a lot of stress as acting head. It was an extra hassle to him, very bad for the school.

His initial strategy was to remove Rebecca from the situation, seeking professional help for school:

He said: 'Go to your doctor. Contact your union. I'll contact mine. We'll be in touch. It's going to be difficult because I can't speak to you directly. We'll probably seem as if we're on different sides, you getting advice from your union for your protection, me getting advice from mine. Don't think I'm neglecting you, if I'm not directly in touch, but this is going to be operational'.

Rebecca felt

the need to protect the school was uppermost. He didn't want there to be a big ruction, which I understand, wanted to keep it internal. I couldn't speak about it. It was all very hush-hush. Colleagues didn't know what had happened. I felt very cut off. I asked my union what to do because I hadn't heard from any of them ... I sent a note with the Head's agreement saying what had happened.

This letter had desired results. 'The staff were very supportive. I value that so much, your own network of supporters close to you'. The actions of management thus initially isolated Rebecca from school support networks during a crucial period.

Teachers spoke of organisational dilemmas over who held responsibility for support provision. They perceived schools as interpreting stress-related illness in monolithic terms, generally isolating home factors or personal deficiencies as causing stress-related illness. This influenced beliefs about support provision, in terms of time, personnel and financial resources, as not necessarily within school remits, as Luke explained:

My present head is very much into finance, won't support people out of the school budget plan. He suggested some people who need to be supported shouldn't be supported by school processes, but by other processes. If that's the case, and the person isn't getting help, then they're never going to get better. It's obvious a school environment can help them get better.

However, the high numbers of teachers requiring support overloaded support systems.

People don't feel anybody's been able to help. They've papered over the cracks. It seems all right now. Then the person helping has gone on to another problem, left the person to it. That exacerbates the situation. In a very big school like this, it's always moving on to the next train, because it's always coming down the line. You can't afford to spend time in the engine room, because the next one's busy queuing up behind. (Jonathon)

Stress-related illness limited the provision of union support, Margot and Ralph unable to fulfill their duties as union representatives. 'So many teachers were putting on' Emily's union rep., 'she was practically having a nervous breakdown herself'.

As Lazarus (1990) notes, there is wide variation in perceptions of support, the ability to accept or use it, the skills and time of professionals, family members and friends, and differences between what is offered, and what is received. Professional support needs commitment from individual teachers, senior management, and departmental colleagues. When professional support was available, there were problems providing skilled personnel, sustaining organisational resources and the commitment to hold preventive and protective measures in place.

Support systems set up by management on teachers' return to work proved largely unworkable, with no directed time to facilitate commitment. The initial support on Rebecca's return to school, for instance, was 'brilliant. Bobby elected to be my 'buddy', my minder. Staff were wonderful, supported me, welcoming me back in, offering to be with me'. However, within two weeks this ceased as colleagues became 'engrossed in workloads', with a second Ofsted inspection and mock SATs looming. Rebecca felt constrained in actively seeking help from internal support systems as 'everybody was so busy. You couldn't break down because you knew it would re-arrange the whole schedule'. Emily perceived her support needs as 'putting pressure on colleagues. Other people had too many problems to be able to help. There was no room for anyone else to be draining their energies. It just adds to the stress, really preyed on my conscience'. The needs of stressed colleagues thus spread the stress 'virus'.

I was angry about the way I felt I'd been treated. I felt that treatment had led me to become depressed. (Andrew)

The issue of teacher competency has maintained a high public profile since Chris Woodhead, as schools' chief inspector, was reported as suggesting there were 15,000 'failing' teachers (O'Reilly, 1999). Stephen, Emily, Celia, Sally, William, Andrew and Terence reported suffering further harm due to emotional trauma surrounding school interventions regarding their perceived competency to teach. As Andrew declared, 'the situation was detrimental to my feelings'. Teachers felt management had little appreciation of the impact of stress-related illness on competency (see chapter 3). They viewed teaching performance as impaired *because* they were suffering from stress-related illnesses, unrecognised by, and/or mismanaged, by school processes. As Emily held, 'I was struggling because I was ill'.

'Ask for help' is a main suggestion advocated by organisations such as teacher unions and Teacherline. However, teachers here felt this exposed individuals to accusations of incompetency. Stephen, having lost confidence in classroom management, found the help of colleagues compounded his sense of hopelessness as 'students wouldn't calm down for them either'. Emily's account illustrates how health can be impaired further through the mismatch between professional support in theory and practice. 'Senior management really did put themselves out to be decent, the head very sympathetic, but deeply pained by the whole process'. In a 'balkanised' department (Hargreaves, 1994) of young teachers, with sharp differentiation between groups, Emily, for the first time in her career, developed no supportive departmental social relationships in four years at

this school. She appointed a colleague from another faculty in the role of 'buddy', where 'observing with the person I felt more at ease with, helped'. However, departmental colleagues were expected to provide the bulk of supports. Emily perceived professional support 'clashed with the actual real personal relations within the department'. Her HoD

had a bad leg, family problems, illness, didn't have any energy, interest or caring left. He was never there after half-past two, used to go straight home to get his kids. He was very anti-me, couldn't stand me, didn't want to hire me. When the person in charge of you doesn't like you, it's particularly difficult. I was supposed to see him once a week, but he was busy or late. He was supposed to observe my teaching but often couldn't make it so that didn't work out. I had lesson plans to fill in, but no-one ever looked at them.

Professional support may not necessarily be interpreted, or received, as a benefit (Lazarus, 1990), partly due to increasing demands on time and workload, which made Emily for example, 'ill'. There was more required preparation time, writing out every minute of every lesson, enormously time-consuming. Observing others used up time. It means a huge amount of work'.

Teachers described 'mortification' processes (Goffman, 1961). For Andrew, a disciplinary hearing before management and governors followed an internal investigation concerning a single student's claim that Andrew had lost one piece of work:

I was mortified. Thought I'm going to lose my job. It was awful. I felt I was on trial for something I thought so trivial. It was like a formal court hearing! There was myself, the Union representative next to me, with the Governors, the Head and Deputy arranged in a semicircle facing us firing questions at me. I was asking my union man for advice before I'd answer the question.

Little is known about how people who are disciplined interpret events (Rollinson et al, 1997). According to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Services (ACAS, 1977, ch.9), disciplinary procedures 'should not be viewed primarily as a means of imposing sanctions. They should be designed to emphasise and encourage improvements in individual conduct'. Teachers perceived measures imposed as punishment, not as rehabilitation. The focus of inquiry tended to be task-oriented. The improvement focus therefore was also task-oriented, not person-oriented, with no diagnosis of underlying problems, past achievements and positive appraisals disregarded. The label 'incompetent' was perceived as ensuring increased managerial scrutiny and more likelihood of fault-finding.

The outcome for Andrew, for example, was a formal year of 'probation', characterised by fear. Given no choice over supervision, his 'care' was placed in the hands of one deputy, having a bullying reputation (corroborated by colleagues), with whom he had a troubled interpersonal relationship. Andrew reported this Deputy as often arriving unannounced in his classroom, walking around writing on his clipboard, leaving without speaking, and providing no feedback. He would threaten Andrew on Friday afternoons, and the last days of terms, with vague suggestions of impending problems, planned classroom visits, marking checks, which often failed to materialise. Andrew

felt 'angry', 'more and more criticised', perceiving the deputy supervising him as 'vindictive', 'constantly checking up, determined to find fault':

I started to doubt my own ability. Looking over my shoulder all the time, I found very, very stressful. I was told I would be helped, that people would come into my classroom and help. Well, with friends like that who needs enemies?

Competency issues

Industrial discipline refers to 'action taken against an individual who fails to conform to the rules of an organisation of which he (or she) is a member' (Wheeler, 1976: 237). Rollinson et al (1997: 284) claim the purpose of disciplinary processes in many organisations is 'the internalisation of an organisational rule and the future exercise of self-discipline'. Some of my teachers perceived the threat of future competency proceedings as a political tool, as intimidation. Terence, Andrew, Sally, and Celia, outspoken in their opposition to some consequences of educational reform, felt the threat of competency procedures was used to 'silence' them and remove troublesome organisational emotions (see chapter 4). Sally 'was devastated by these events (see chapter 4). I know the warning signs. I knew what he'd do, try to discredit me, start to get things written down that would make me out to be incompetent. I've seen it happen before. It virtually sends you insane just thinking about it. My Head had created a situation where I could no longer work there'.

With deteriorating health, Terence devised a report, 'strategy plan' suggesting devolving some of his work overload:

On the last day of term, I received a letter from him, not responding to my report, saying he'd received this report. However he was dissatisfied with the work I'm doing and submitted an official complaint to the Local Authority. There will be a meeting with the Education Officer at the beginning of the Autumn Term, to go through procedures for dismissal. He never spoke to me about this.

Andrew's account illustrates the insidious nature of the threat of disciplinary proceedings on professional practice and emotional health. As the end of his probationary year approached, he was threatened with competency procedures regarding any deterioration in professional practice. He reported increasing pressure from his deputy, 'coming into my lessons more and more frequently, checking my books more and more frequently. I thought he's now got 2 weeks to find something wrong'. His wife Sarah recalled his union representative saying management were 'making him suffer', which would compromise competency further. 'If he's so battered down that he'll make mistakes, then they would use that against him' (Sarah). Andrew was

getting worse, forgetting things, not doing things. It's self-perpetuating. I didn't have the confidence, which may have made me make mistakes. Then worry about the mistakes knocked my confidence further. It just built up and built up.

For someone experiencing loss of control over both family and working lives, the actions of the school intensified these feelings. Andrew suffered a complete emotional breakdown a few days before his probation year ended.

Union advice during such proceedings was to obtain evidence for possible legal action. Andrew, Margot, Ralph, Terence, Sally and Jessica all found the need to obtain and produce documentation a further drain on emotional energies:

It was as though you were going to be tried for something and trying to prove your innocence. I started gathering evidence, going through files, warfare almost. I thought why should I be doing this? That in itself was making me concentrate less on my job, and more on keeping them from stabbing me in the back, in preparation in case I was taken to the Governors again. (Andrew)

Teachers reported fear of failure controlling classroom practice. Andrew again illustrates this well:

It knocked me completely off what I was saying. It feels very threatening, a feeling of fear. I couldn't do anything without thinking: 'What are Management going to make of this? If I do this, what will they say? If I do that, what will they say?' Gradually I was thinking more of how it would appear to others than about how effective it would be in doing the job.

Jessica felt 'panic. What's she going to pick me up for? Can I do something to stop what she can say to me so she can't have a go at me, because if she was really angry she'd pick you up in front of the kids'. Sally's head's entrance affected her cognition. 'For a moment I couldn't think what I was teaching them'. Andrew 'felt very, very threatened and defensive':

My behaviour changed as a result of him being there. It made me think very carefully about what I said before I said it and try to appear to be terribly in control of everything all the time, putting on an act. I certainly wasn't being myself. Normally my concern would be to help students but in that situation I was thinking of myself, thinking what should *I* do to keep myself out of any possible criticism or trouble. The students were no longer important. It was *my* behaviour being observed. I was doing what I thought would make that easier, rather than what would be in the best interests of students. It was self-protection.

Andrew consciously altered scheduled lessons, hoping to switch to the most proactive impressive parts of the lesson should management arrive. This increased anxiety and diverted emotional energy towards self-survival rather than towards teaching.

In such situations teachers had to manage their own emotions plus those of students, whose behaviours also changed through the experience of supervision. Andrew's students for example, 'assumed *their* work was being checked. Some were quite annoyed he made criticisms. Everyone feels under threat. Everyone sighs when he leaves'. Sally spoke of students remarking: 'He ruined your lesson, Miss'. She described her headteacher interrupting an English lesson, demanding to see the last lesson plan, walking around, picking up and looking through folders, loudly criticising her marking, telling her what she should have written as comments in front of the class, then coming to the front and giving his analysis of *Romeo and Juliet*, asking the 13-year-olds what the lesson objectives were. Their reply: 'Don't know'. Sally began to

feel angry with these disruptive pupils ... very angry with him, his lack of support and undermining attitude ... I was struggling because I was angry ... flustered by the behaviour of the kids. Instead of offering any real support, he was actually making it worse, telling me off in front of them. I was reeling, in a state of shock, used so much adrenaline trying to sort the children out, I couldn't think, so flummoxed.

He left abruptly, then returned announcing to the whole class that Sally should attend a meeting after school where they would discuss the teaching of *Romeo and Juliet* which would help her. Sally felt

about to explode, but I'd got a room full of children. In our professional capacity, it would not have done to shout: 'Get out, you bastard. I don't want you undermining me in front of the kids'. The actual anger didn't surface until later. It was utter fury when it did. As the lesson was winding up, it began to hit me and I was absolutely livid. This was going to be a battle, going to be nasty.

Teachers spent time calming the emotional climate in the classroom. 'It starts building up: "What did he say to you?" and they're all discussing what he'd said' (Andrew).

The kids come on your side, automatically rally round you. You've this tremendous problem of being professional when she's gone. The kids are going, 'Well, that fiend!' It upsets your lesson and *they've* got to get it off their chests. So *you* don't get to be able to vent your feelings because you're

trying very hard to remain professional, and yet let the kids calm down as well. (Jessica)

Classroom interruptions thus increased emotion work through changing the focus of attention and altering the emotional climate of the classroom, increasing stress for both teachers and students.

Disciplinary procedures, threatened and actual, increased negative emotion and vulnerability to psychological harm. For some teachers in this sample, the disciplinary experience inhibited recovery, contributing to a breakdown in health through reducing the 'quality of social transactions in the workplace, and increasing physical and emotional workloads. Trajectory management was a social process, influenced by levels of individual and collective emotional awareness, and dominant stress discourses. The strategies teachers and schools adopted proved inadequate to halt the descent into stress-related illness. Offering temporary respite, they resulted in 'false recoveries' (Carlyle, 1999), and inhibited analysis of underlying issues, and, in many cases, precipitated breakdown.

In the following chapter I examine self-renewal processes. I explore teachers' perceptions of what helped and hindered both their recovery and their struggles to rebuild their lives, resulting for some, in a renewed sense of ontological security.

CHAPTER 7. THE RECONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

I've lost my job, and it's OK. I lost what I saw as a long-term career. I lost my sense of identity. I still survived it. (Rebecca)

Self-renewal is an emotional journey whereby people learn how to move out of negative situations and into positive ones satisfying their needs for work, hope and love (Lankard, 1993). As Freudenberger and Richelson (1980: xxi) write, 'Burnout signals not despair but hope. Recognized and attended to, it can become a positive energy force, signifying that the time has come for a cease and desist action, a hard look at yourself, and a change to something new'.

In this chapter I explore the experience of 're-birth' (Marcus). Through self-renewal processes, teachers in my sample came to terms with their losses. They regained physical, mental and emotional agility. They re-evaluated their lives, and rebuilt the self. Key themes in the self-renewal process were the 'comeback trail', creating a new life plan, and regaining ontological security.

Factors Facilitating the 'Comeback Trail'

The 'comeback trail' is 'the uphill journey back to a satisfying workable life within the boundaries imposed by the physical and/or mental limitations', involving attempts 'to regain those salient aspects of the Self lost, characterized by periods of acceleration, reversal, setback, plateau, and variation in the boundaries of the limitations' (Strauss, 1987: 225/26). Sociological and socio-psychological research indicates this path is generally not taken alone (Hudson, 1991). Recovery from stress-related illness requires

temporary social structures, holding environments providing safety, acceptance and toleration. This involves extensive support systems with human and material resources to facilitate the recovery of emotional, mental and physical health. 'Critical friends' were a vital resource. Challenging social realities and providing emotional support, they helped teachers traverse unscheduled status passages (Glaser and Strauss, 1971). They enabled creative identity work, 'the range of activities individuals engage in to create, present and sustain personal identities that are congruent with and supportive of the self-concept' (Snow and Anderson, 1987: 1348), essential to rebuilding ontological security.

Important facilitators of identity reconstruction in upward phases of the illness trajectory in my study involved the actions of comeback initiators, the provision of time to mend, and rebuilding emotional capital.

Comeback initiators

Once you've disappeared under the stress fog, it takes somebody from outside to say: 'You've got to stop. You've gone far too far'. (Ralph)

Teachers and their families clearly delineated recovery and self-renewal as social processes, highly dependent on the trajectory work of others, one of the main conditions being the presence of a comeback initiator (Strauss, 1987). As Veninga and Spradley (1981: 262) write, 'When burnout sets in, it feels like you're sinking into quicksand. The more you struggle, the faster you sink. You long for someone to reach out, to grab your hand, to pull you to safety'. Charlotte was 'a fallen angel. One that needed her wings tidying up and held'. 'With everybody's help' Luke managed to

recover, his psychiatric nurse saying, 'If you can't see any hope you're not going to get better, and you only see hope by people coming around and supporting you'. Family and medical practitioners were important here.

- Family

Partners were 'the prime mover' in recognising distress for many of these teachers, making, and accompanying them to, appointments with GPs, and ensuring compliance with medical advice. Andrew's wife Sarah saw he'd 'reached crisis point. Saw I was emotionally distressed. Saw it was time the doctor intervened'. Gareth and Marjorie 'went together. I looked at the expression on Marjorie's face as I was talking. That in part moved me to tears because I saw how all I'd been describing was affecting her'. Previous experience of stress aided recognition. Ralph's wife Alison 'had a bout of stress herself two or three years ago. She was saying: "Do you realise you're doing the following things?" And of course the answer was "No"'. Margot's husband Stuart challenged her self- awareness:

When I discovered what this was, it didn't sink in. The consultant told me it was stress, a dysfunction of the jaw. Later that night I said to Stuart: 'He says I've to wear the guard for six weeks'. Stuart said: 'Yes. That's right'. I said: 'It's day and night. How am I going to teach?' He turned to me and I remember the look. He said: 'What are you talking about Margot? You cannot teach. You can't go back for six weeks'. Up till that stage, it hadn't hit me.

- General practitioners

A diagnosis of stress-related illness was important in providing explanations for bodily dysfunction. 'My doctor immediately said this was depression. So it was chemically acknowledged and recognised' (Edward). Marcus felt it gave 'a justification for feeling that way. I was therefore less likely to rush back to work earlier than I should have done'. Doctors validated feelings, and advised absence. Gareth's GP said:

'I don't want you going back there'. He had a different approach [to the Head]. He showed me such respect. This was not a man coming in who was a broken-down failure, who couldn't hack it any more. There was a treatment of me - he respected me and myself, who I was, what I was. I found that moved me.

Doctors increased awareness of the severity of illness. Ralph's reported his GP advising: 'You're suffering from depression. It's stress-related. Stop and take a rest. I can't be responsible for the coronary you'll have within the next two years'. Terence was also made aware of the life-threatening nature of his illness:

He took my blood pressure, saw my record on diabetes control. Then he said: 'Without question unless you take this three month break, at least a three month break, you will be dead!'

He that lacks the time to mourn, lacks time to mend. (Sir Henry Taylor)

The 'cocooning' period after severe stress-related illness entails disengagement, a 'turning inward to take stock, to find your own basic values, and to disengage emotionally and mentally from the life structure' (Hudson, 1991: 69). Some teachers experienced complete bodily failure. 'It's just a total blank, like a zombie. I slept most of the day as well as the night. I was somewhere pretty close to the bottom if not at the bottom, and I stayed there quite a long time' (Stephen). 'It's as though the eight weeks didn't exist. I didn't exist! I got up in the morning, sat about virtually all day, went to bed' (Andrew).

Teachers described the need for a moratorium. 'I had to give myself space to have a bit of breakdown' (Celia). 'With the other emotional things going on in life, you need a rest from it' (Jonathon). Alex remembered the loss of motivation, 'wanting to escape. I toyed with selling up, going off on the streets. I had no drive to do anything else'. Margot wanted to 'enter a convent. If it hadn't been for me having children I would have. I'd have been quite happy not to speak to anybody. At that stage that's all I wanted - to be locked away in a cell, me, and God, and the Bible'. The decision to temporarily withdraw from social life, to steer clear of both negative and positive emotional experiences, helped avoid emotive dissonance, a vital component in recovering ontological security (Giddens, 1991). Maureen for example,

deliberately chose to withdraw from the world. I need to be let be for a bit, to come back to the person I know I am. All I want is a choosing-what-I'm-

going-to-do day, nothing cataclysmic happening, avoiding anything stressful I can see coming ... I'm in this cocoon I've invented. When I gave up teaching, I wanted to be a recluse. It's my own therapy, my way of coping, my bridging thing, giving myself challenges I can cope with, because they're in my own sphere. *I'm* in control.

Feelings of despair initially grew during the depression stage of the transitional cycle (Adams et al, 1976). 'I became even more depressed because I could not see what would happen to me' (Gareth). 'I got very despondent, beginning to think very negatively that perhaps I couldn't do the job any more' (Andrew). The moratorium was helpful in providing a grieving period for the loss of both the past and the anticipated future (Kubler-Ross, 1975). 'There was a grieving there because I was leaving something that basically I loved, teaching. I felt devastated' (Gareth). However, a time for reflection gradually emerged, a time to undertake biographical work and identity work (Strauss et al, 1985), as Margot explains:

There should be time in your life when you have time to stare: 'What is this life but full of care, we have no time to stand and stare'. I didn't have that. For 18 years I didn't have that. Then all of a sudden I was at home. I was ill. I had time to think: 'Hey! Where am I going from here?'

Time to take stock was important in increasing self-knowledge and heightening emotional self-awareness:

Soul searching takes an incredible amount of time. I got really involved in my own understanding. What was making me tick? What was enjoyable about

teaching still? Was it worth continuing? Things I'd been taught, inherited from my mother, the work ethos, this: 'You cannot allow people to help you. You've got to be in command', all seemed such a nonsense. Why am I feeling like this? Why can't I allow people to help me? I'm only one person. They're overloading me. It's not my fault. I hadn't really respected myself enough. I'd allowed people to take so much from me but I hadn't allowed anyone to put things back. (Margot)

Recovery involved overcoming fears of the unknown, understanding constraints, and the challenges of objectifying the self to obtain insight, as Charlotte well illustrates:

That's scary because I know I've to start right from point 1. First of all, it's got to be therapy for myself to find out, like you do with kids, where am I? Which bits do I want? Which bits are me? Which bits were thrust upon me? I want what I was born to, not what was thrust on me. They can take that back. ... The biggest shock of all is seeing yourself, what you really are, instead of what you thought you were, your role model, my suit, my clipboard, my shiny buttons. Without my suit, my clipboard and my shiny buttons what have I got left? What is there now? I adorned all these to help me get on better in my job but I didn't realise I was doing it to replace things I'd lost. I thought I was doing it for other reasons, but now, looking back, I can see I had to replace this feeling of loss of power with something else. (Charlotte)

Time out was thus important to facilitate mending, the process of healing, limitations stretching and reknitting, the process of reassembling the biography (Strauss, 1987).

I've had time to recover and make sensible decisions. You can make very irrational decisions. It's important to find yourself back where you were in the past, to let time pass before you make your next move, not to leave, not to run ... I could go in and not have any ghosts in the cupboard. (Luke)

Rebuilding emotional capital

Emotion work or 'sentimental work' (Strauss et al, 1985) was a vital ingredient in reconstructing emotional capital. Key trajectory workers here were family members, friends and colleagues. They helped accumulate emotional capital by lessening negative emotional experiences and creating opportunities for gaining positive emotional experiences.

- The lessening of negative emotional experiences

Individual family members reduced emotive dissonance through proactively altering the emotional climate within the home. They monitored and managed both their own emotion states and those of others, soaking up emotion, and establishing support networks.

Margot's husband Stuart felt 'like a ping pong ball', describing emotion work as 'trying to juggle very many balls without dropping any, keeping the boys happy, keeping the job OK, trying to keep her talking'. He held his own feelings in, since 'blowing [his] top' might have 'pushed her over the top'. Individual family members provided protective roles. Rachel's husband Matthew had been chronically ill for many years (see chapter 5). Rachel now occupied the illness role. Daughter Hannah described 'role

reversals' as Matthew taking over Rachel's former roles becoming the gatekeeper regarding family interactions with Rachel, and manager of the children's emotions and actions.

Dad tried to stop being ill. He was being very protective, trying to manipulate us into looking after Mum, saying: 'No, don't ask that. Put it differently', or 'We'll do this'.

Hannah protected both parents, managing her own, and others', emotion state, avoiding situations that would 'wind Mum up'. She 'weaned' herself away from 'tense, sensitive situations', not saying things she would normally have, careful how she treated them. Realising worrying about them made *her* ill, Hannah, now at college, compartmentalised spheres, protecting herself by 'blocking it out. When I see them, I worry about them'.

Ralph's son Paul, constantly checked the household's emotion atmosphere. 'Everything you did you had to think: "Does this affect him?"' His sister Fiona

tried to ensure Dad was happy, that things I did didn't upset him, cause another trigger. ... I'd tell Paul: 'Make sure you do this. Don't aggravate him'. We looked at everything through Dad, through his eyes, to make sure it was right in his eyes, and it would be right in our eyes.

Fiona was conscious of her role as gatekeeper regarding her brother, but also of indirect control by her father, demonstrating the interaction of self-governing (autonomously

regulated) and other-governing (regulated by others) emotion management (Tolich, 1993).

Some partners felt unsuccessful. Jessica's husband Frank for example, 'tried very strongly to act as gatekeeper', telling the children, 'Leave her alone. Give her time'. Finding they'd gone to her, he exacerbated tensions. 'I'd jump all over them, making the situation worse'.

Families reduced demands and encouraged removal from stressful situations. Ralph's family for example, made 'policy decisions' within family meetings, creating solitude for Ralph, removing internal and external responsibilities, reorganising and redistributing them amongst themselves, limiting incoming phone calls, dealing with mail, school communications, and providing meals. Like others in this sample, Gina took over both her and Ralph's share of household responsibilities (see chapter 5).

It was important to feel supported by colleagues in taking long-term absence. Marcus and Luke alone felt colleagues acknowledged the role illness plays in life, and the need for space to allow the body to recover. Marcus' Head

asked how things were going. She didn't hassle me, didn't say: 'When are you coming back? We've got to think of a replacement'. She didn't put me under any pressure. When I said I felt guilty because I was going to be off a long time, she said: 'When people are ill, they're ill. That's the way life is'. As if to say, 'Go away and forget about it'. So she was supportive from that point of view. She seemed to understand.

Luke on the other hand,

never had any comments, any phone call from the Head, note or letter. The support was there from colleagues ... The message: 'You're ill. Come back when you're ready'. That was really important for me. 'You'll need time. We're not going to think about you coming back. You're not going to get better unless you take time. There's no stigma to it. If you break your leg you're off work for 3 months'.

- The accumulation of positive emotional experiences

The role of family and friends was important in creating opportunities for increasing positive emotion through graduated activity. Rachel's husband Matthew, for example, having experienced similar experiences, knew recovery required time, space, support and fun. He created 'normalising' experiences, taking agoraphobic Rachel out. Excursions gradually became more challenging, with opportunities for

being daft. Matthew realised how important it was that (a) I had company, because he'd been through it without company during the day, and (b) that he'd got to keep getting me outside. So long as I could go out with him then I was a stage on. So he'd go off to Sainsburys and I'd go with him, following him around because I couldn't think what to do. I wasn't fit to think about it. Then we'd have a cup of coffee and a doughnut. Then take the dog for a walk.

Ralph's family re-prioritised their lives, putting the family before personal interests and work rather than last in line, deliberately setting aside time to spend together. His

daughter Fiona explained how, on everyone's return after school, they'd 'have a pot of tea. Everybody has a chance to say what's happened in the day. Everybody listens and asks questions'. Alex, with no close family, experienced positive transactions through re-establishing contact with estranged family members.

While much self-renewal literature emphasises the role of the individual (Hardin, 1993; Kitchens, 1994), life-span scientists place great emphasis on the interactive nature of development, which is 'co-determined by the internal structure and external socio-cultural circumstances: changes in either create the conditions for developmental change' (Fiske and Chiriboga, 1990: 146). Friends were essential facilitators of positive emotional experiences. Andrew's wife Sarah, for example, unable to convince her husband of his value, realised the need for an outsider, encouraging him to accept help offered by a former colleague. Des, with a decorating business, took him into 'a different world. It wasn't teaching, wasn't responsibility' (Sarah). For Andrew,

It was an alternative life where I could completely switch off ... I had a blind fear of school. Des wouldn't mention school or teaching. We talked about decorating (laughs). At first I didn't help, just watched. Seeing him doing something, I'd give him a hand. Gradually I was doing things, being thanked, having the work commented on as being good. The lady whose room we decorated was very pleased. The card said 'Thank you for this wonderful room'.
I helped do that. It gave me a bit more confidence back.

Andrew perceived these proofs of personal accomplishment, the production of positive emotion, as vital components in his recovery.

Schools were a source of positive emotion for very few teachers in this sample during this period. Luke however, 'had cards from the kids. They wrote letters to me, sent chocolates'. After almost six months' absence, his colleagues actively demonstrated his value by encouraging a gradual return to school, giving him time, actively managing positive emotional experiences:

I couldn't face being at school ... Part of the process of getting better was you've got to get out, be able to get in the car, be able to drive, things like co-ordinating movements. Gradually I could go out into the environment that was threatening. I'd go sit in the park. My head of faculty used to walk with me. It took a while to do. I met a colleague from work who lived near school, as close to school as I could get. I was in a really bad state. The pastoral head of house came round. He talked to me. He was a really caring person. That's why I could talk to him. ... To get to school I went at weekends. Someone would meet me at school. The Deputy Head came. We'd walk round school, see it's not such a bad place ... so it was really good, the whole environment was really good ... I managed to gradually get to school.

Small successes thus aided the gradual build-up of confidence.

- Understanding emotion

Counselling was invaluable in enhancing understanding of stress emotion. For eight of these teachers, counselling processes aided 'rebirthing' (Emily). Marcus, Jonathon, Rachel, Ralph, Emily, William, Rebecca, and Alex found counselling styles fitting their needs. They felt unable to deal with present issues until they had dealt with historical

emotionality. The most beneficial counselling therefore entailed both an exploration of the negative emotions of teaching, *and* of the negative emotion resurfacing from the past, such as unresolved grief, anger and loss. Rachel's counsellor for example, 'initially treated it as bereavement counselling, got me to think about Dad, and things that hurt'. For Jonathon, counselling 'was the most essential thing that happened':

I was at rock bottom, partly due to, 'Where the hell's this career's going? Do I really want to have a career?' It saved me, saved my bacon, sorted the poor tormented mind. It got me to be level headed about the past, things gnawing away at me - the maggots. It's allowed me to cope with it, reflect, calm down and go in to school.

The counselling process provided emotional and technical support and challenge. As habitual ways of living were challenged, 'the beginnings of a period of major growth' were signalled (Fiske and Chiriboga, 1990: 167). Counselling confronted socialisation patterns and learned ways of coping, providing understanding, new knowledges and coping strategies. 'It threw open doors, made me think, look at myself without being super- or hyper-critical. There's a need to be honest, see ourselves as others see us' (Ralph). 'It made me think about emotions' (Marcus). 'When you're feeling grotty, you can't see it. My counsellor challenged some irrational thoughts' (Rachel). Increasing self-awareness was a distressing process. 'Initially it destroyed me. It actually makes it worse. It was very painful, what you had to go through to get to the other side' (Jonathon). Alex found it 'hard. The second session I felt a lot easier. We were tackling the same issue and I was still in tears'. Rebecca 'learned to accept it. I opened up a bit, and could see how I had got into such a state'.

Insights were gained about understanding emotion states. Marcus illustrates this well:

My counsellor got me to think about what had brought out violent emotions in me before, and how I felt about it now, and whether I still had these feelings. I suddenly found the most traumatic part of my life was my divorce, the feelings of animosity I had for my ex-wife. We're talking fifteen years ago. Those feelings disappeared completely after these sessions. He made me look at divorce and marriage from a different standpoint, made me understand why she couldn't live with me. Made me realise that if I could do that with something that had bugged me for fifteen years, I can do the same thing with this situation. Having got rid of that, it left me space to sort other things.

Counselling helped the understanding and managing of emotion within classroom interactions. Marcus for example, learned to look for earlier signs of emotional distress, how to manage anger, and 'to think about how I was going to react rather than just fly off the handle'.

It was important to these teachers that counselling occurred in a safe environment unconnected to school or home. 'It allowed me to talk to someone who didn't know me, going where you knew it was totally unthreatening, wasn't going to go any further' (Jonathon). Rachel

did a lot of crying. It was very good to be able to do that in private. I couldn't cry in front of Matthew. He would have been hurt. You know that person is going to forget about it. They're not going to take it home with them. You can say things you wouldn't say to anyone else.

Counselling allowed closure on the past, and increased individual emotional literacy through rebuilding self-esteem and confidence. Emotional understanding was also facilitated through increased knowledge of stress discourses. Terence's wife Alicia, for example, through union involvement regarding litigation against the school began 'to see more realistically how much stress there had been around him, becoming slightly less occupied with who was right and who was wrong'. Offering advice and quick solutions increased Terence's stress through heightening socially undermining communication patterns. Alicia later adopted a more eclectic stress discourse, able to seek counselling for both herself and for Terence, which she feels greatly helped create positive transactions aiding their personal relationship and family renewal.

Tangible rewards within the comeback phase of the illness trajectory facilitated healing, and the rebuilding of emotional capital. As self-renewal progressed, teachers were able to consider creating a new life plan.

Creating a New Life Plan

Feeling they had recovered from stress-related illness, my teachers had to make decisions about their future. This involved negotiating a changed life plan. There were options of returning to the same school environment, finding employment in another school environment, or leaving the teaching world. I found Hudson's (1991: 53) model of the cycle of change useful in viewing changes in teacher's life structures. According to Hudson, the main elements involved in successfully negotiating change are (a) recognising when change is necessary and (b) overcoming fear of the unknown. However, this view does not take account of constraints within individual and family social contexts. The decision to make a 'mini-transition', 'minor surgery, with a

strategic plan to make the life structure work better' (Hudson, 1991: 69) or a 'life transition', involving 'transformation of the self' usually in a different life structure (ibid: 90), was partly influenced by financial considerations, and partly by precipitating factors (see chapters 4-5), the experience of the illness trajectory (see chapters 3), individual and collective resources (see chapters 3-6), the quality of interventions (see chapter 6), and levels of organisational, familial and individual emotional literacy (see chapters 3-6).

Rebecca for instance, was 'terrified of losing the ability to be the breadwinner'. Andrew and Stephen feared they might not find high enough salaries elsewhere. Margot's husband Stuart described the 'no win, Catch 22 position' where loss of Margot's income through ill-health would mean losing their home and valued lifestyle, while a return to work would put her health in jeopardy.

Measures of financial security allowed more choice. Edward and Maureen accepted early retirement. Rachel, Morag, Celia, Sally, and Gareth resigned. 'I love teaching but I can't teach in that environment. It's a rotten job' (Sally). Rachel accepted Incapacity Benefit. Celia and Sally had partners with sufficient incomes to tide the family through rocky financial times, while Gareth had a teaching pension, his wife Marjorie working. William, Emily, Stephen, Rebecca, Terence, and Marcus were awarded breakdown pensions.

For the eighteen teachers who returned to working environments, self-renewal processes were greatly influenced by organisational factors. Although some of these teachers, Luke, Andrew and Margot for example, experienced 'cocooning', they did not radically restructure their lives like those in Hudson (1991). Jessica, Alex, Andrew,

Jonathon, Margo, Ralph, Charlotte, and Luke pursued a 'mini-transition', returning to their original schools. Here they re-entered negative emotional climates. This required major adjustment, which proved largely unsuccessful. Stephen, Terence, Rebecca, Marcus, Gareth, William, Edward, Celia, Emily, and Rachel underwent life transitions, some successfully building new lives.

In this section I consider factors inhibiting self-renewal, coping with negative emotional climates, and factors promoting self-renewal.

Factors inhibiting self-renewal

For some, the return to employment was marred by continued physical, mental and emotional distress. Here, negative emotion persisted, sustaining vulnerability to stress-related illness, and hampering efforts at self-renewal. Key themes here were increased pressures and managing stigma.

- Increased pressures

We've got fewer staff and more pupils, fewer free periods and larger classes than last year, more of those fewer free periods being used up as cover. The workload has increased. I'm finding it difficult to get everything done in the time. (Jonathon)

The workplace is seen as crucial to the maintenance of social and psychological identity (Flam, 1993). Teachers spoke of returning to schools in flux, where negative emotional climates continued to maintain high levels of frustration and anxiety. Opportunities for

increasing positive emotion through workplace activities, and for reconstructing positive work identities were hampered by continued intensification, the demands of marketisation and financial constraints, league tables and the implementation of a range of management initiatives in response to the demands of Ofsted:

We've changed our school day in order to save money on the budget. We've lost non-contact time. We've had four redundancies this year not replaced, so they're all working harder. (Yvonne, deputy head, Walton Green)

The demands of constant school improvement meant

pressure from the top all the time. You've got to move up. Everyone's running around in a panic. It's got to be better next year or there's going to be trouble. As a mathematician, it's bound to go up and it's bound to go down. (Luke)

Promises of modifications to working conditions on returning to work were not always carried through. Margot 'didn't get the promised technician'. Gareth was assured a changed timetable, but 'nothing changed'. Teachers reported workloads continuing to rise, and difficulties maintaining good social relationships. Margot, for example, a highly popular and successful teacher, described as 'a victim of her own success', with a high GCSE pass rate, many low ability children choosing her practical subject as an option, was 'very angry, very upset' at the uneven distribution of workload within her department in her colleague's favour. She continued 'to have fits at school about it. I feel terribly bitter that my HoD's deliberately put this timetable upon me, and it comes

out. I can't help it'. Structural demands such as staffing, timetabling difficulties and financial constraints sustained emotional trauma. Margot was

starting to think: 'I've got on top of this. I've got on top of these emotions. I'm really coming out of this'. Next year, they've lumbered me with a timetable that's twice as hard to run as last year, even though I was ill last year, more paperwork, more marking, lots of problems trying to keep in contact with other teachers. They're adding more burdens. Yesterday I cried all afternoon, in a right stress. I couldn't sleep again.

Self-renewal was difficult in such environments:

I don't know how I'm going to get through it. I've asked for help. I've done everything this pamphlet has told me to do. Please take some of this burden away from me! (Margot)

Flexible systems to support return were predominantly absent. Recovery takes time, with many ups and downs (Buyssen, 1996). Hudson (1991: 96) suggests life transitions proceed 'gradually and sporadically', typically taking up to three years, where 'grieving, healing, and renewal are organic and take time. There is no shortcut, no quick fix'. One of the main structural processes hindering self-renewal was the requirement to return to work full time. Local authorities and schools refused a gradual return beginning on a part-time basis. 'They said you're either fit to work or you're not fit to work. If you're fit to work you do full time, if you're not fit to work, you don't work, completely inflexible' (Luke).

- Managing stigma

It's not socially acceptable to have any sort of mental illness. (Celia)

Coming to terms with bodily failure meant accepting membership of a stigmatised vulnerable group. Marcus 'feared ending up in a looney bin. I had to face the fact that it was a mental thing rather than a physical thing'. Andrew felt

more emotionally vulnerable. It can happen to me. It's not something that only happens to others. In some ways I compare it with physical problems, like I dislocated my shoulder once. This shoulder will never be as strong again. There's nothing I can do about it. Maybe mentally I could be the same way. I'm never going to be quite as strong as before.

Symbolic interactionist perspectives suggest that when people suffer mental and emotional distress, they 'cease to receive positive definitions of themselves from their primary social groups' (Turner, 1987: 73). As Goffman (1964: 57) shows, in his analysis of stigma, people expend emotional energy managing both 'information' about their 'imputed failings', and 'tension generated in social contacts'. Teachers here reported changes in perceived and actual status within school. The experience of stress conferred a new stigmatized status, that of mental and emotional fragility. Stigma was attached to the self, not to the situation. The label 'stress' was feared for its impact on the self, on colleagues, families and careers. 'Having problems with employment [is] a social taboo' (Celia). Alex felt

everybody's looking at me. There's no doubt people's perception changed completely. This has been proven. Relatively young, seemingly dynamic, confident, new second-in department, goes under after two months. I've heard that. When you're in that position, you feel everyone thinks that.

The need to manage stigma within the workplace made self-renewal difficult. Colleagues, family and friends, feared relapse. Celia found 'people are always looking to see if you're well. Is she OK? Is she going to do anything strange?' Managing minor emotional transactions, feared as possible indicators of stress, increased emotional labour, as Andrew explained:

It's not like a physical illness. Before, if I wanted to do something, I did it. Didn't really concern too much about it. If people thought I was mad or crazy, I don't care. Now I think more about it. Will this look good? Will this look bad?

Teachers feared the stress label being permanently associated with reduced levels of competency, the legacy of stress as a long-lasting blemish on careers. Celia's Head 'wouldn't write [her] a reference. I was only there a term officially, only taught six weeks. He said he didn't feel he knew me well enough. I suppose that's fair, but it's still a bit of a blot on that time. Charlotte felt she'd

shot [her]self in the foot twice now, so I'll not be able to get another teaching job. Nobody will want someone who's been off with stress. I feel so depressed. What a bloody waste it is! All those years, all that training.

Interviews were suffused with anxiety:

I'm concerned they ask whether I've been depressed when I go for interviews.

That's the sort of question they ask someone who wants to work with people.

I'm concerned about prejudice. Whether they'll give me a fair chance. (Celia)

Coping within negative emotional climates

Within pressured environments, teachers adjusted their lives and developed coping strategies to overcome negative affect, such as downshifting, 'biding my time', 'don't rock the boat', and separating spheres.

- Downshifting

Some teachers removed themselves from aspects of teaching environments perceived as contributing to negative emotion, while remaining in the same teaching environment. For Ralph, Jonathon and Stephen, this involved downshifting, referring to giving up particular responsibilities, often entailing demotion. Jonathon's 'career aspirations dropped amazingly'. One difficulty in his promoted post was discord with colleagues. Deciding the classroom was a 'safe environment', he took a 'demotion' explaining, 'I don't want to have to deal with conflict, don't want to have to play that game any more'. He reported his decision as unpopular with management, a secretary disclosing, 'Your name is mud'. Ralph, on the other hand, received positive comments from colleagues when he gave up the responsibilities of Head of Year.

Stephen's Head proposed role-redefinition (Troman and Woods, 2001) as a temporary solution to Stephen's problems. Finding it difficult to replace Stephen's IT skills due to

impending school closure, he re-employed Stephen on a temporary part-time basis as IT technician as Stephen was 'the only person who knew personally how to work the computer systems'. Stephen was able to avoid negative transactions with students by dropping teaching tasks while retaining some of the computing he previously enjoyed, a role that created opportunities to increase feelings of competency and self-worth. He no longer had to manage his own emotion, or children's emotion in the classroom. He was able to separate spheres, to balance work and home lives:

I have a lot more choice. I don't bring any work home with me unless I want to. Frequently I'm working in classrooms where children are being difficult.

It's not my problem. I don't even have to stay in the room if I don't want to.

He had time and energy to attend night school to increase his IT skills with a view to entering industry, this period providing an essential time to reflect, increase his knowledge base, and plan his next career move.

- 'Biding my time'

Margot, Jonathon, Andrew, and Alex returned to teaching in Walton Green partly due to family and financial responsibilities. Andrew, 'happy with the kids, happy with the vast majority of colleagues', was no longer committed to Walton Green. Distressed with the present leadership, he was 'unhappy with the methods being used to run it'. He was exploring jobs in other schools, but, as with others here, he felt trapped, his high salary viewed as a drawback. 'They can have college leavers cheaper than me'. When teachers continued to experience social identities inconsistent with self-identities, they employed 'distancing' strategies (Snow and Anderson, 1987). Alex, with both

professional and vocational commitments, felt his job 'more important than anything'. However, he now saw his role in Walton Green as 'training to be a manager. It's a bit like teaching practice'. He planned to 'bide [his] time, keep [his] nose clean, get the reference and move on'. Margot coped during this period by changing her sense of commitment from vocational to instrumental:

It's just a job. I'm getting paid for it. I'm not getting the big thrills I got out of it. I'm prepared to do it as long as I have to. If I could get out, I don't think I would give it a second look back. That's sad. I think that's a reflection of what teaching does to you.

Jonathon observed, 'I keep banging my head against a brick wall saying it's a vocation, but in reality I'm looking for other vocations to follow'.

- 'Don't rock the boat'

Withholding criticism and avoiding 'upsetting the applecart' was a common strategy.

Jonathon was

not as brutal, as spade-is-a-spade as I used to be. I go to meetings, and put my hands under my knees, saying: 'Don't talk. Don't talk'. That's hard for me! I'm quite opinionated.

Alex too declared, 'I'm being careful now. That's a shame, because by being careful, I'm not saying a lot of things that need to be said'. He ceased confronting colleagues:

It's difficult to do things at work that I want to do. It's too much out of my control. I'll carry 'deadwood' very supportively if there's only a small number of people in that position. But when the majority are like that, it's hard. My strategy is to ease off on expectations. Put things in perspective. I can't do anything for these people.

- Separating spheres

Teachers were more successful at separating working and personal lives. Luke doesn't

- do any music in school. I prefer to keep it separate. I'm prepared to stay in school to finish my work, but then I'm always out, digging the garden, doing something outside. That's got to be my time.

Margot removed herself from the teaching world as much as possible, for example, spending her lunch break in town. She avoided all contact with teaching and teachers outside school:

It's this fear, this intrusion on my life. It's something I have to keep separate to keep sane. I wouldn't ever talk about teaching so there's no staff involved in my life. I won't have anybody from school here. If I go to a car boot sale and see a member of staff, my stomach sinks. I feel sick.

Narratives suggested that negative emotional climates and low levels of organisational emotional competencies hampered opportunities for increasing positive emotional experiences through workplace activities. Strategies adopted had negative effects.

Teachers here perceived downshifting as a 'two-edged sword' (Edward). Emily felt her Head's suggestion that she accept a part-time contract would not be helpful, as she would still have to deal with negative emotion within the department (see chapter 6). Downshifting also incurred 'losing face' (Jonathon). Although it lowered some stress surrounding interpersonal emotion work with colleagues and students, it contributed to further intrapersonal emotional conflicts:

I've rationalised my future. That creates a sort of stress. There's no turning back. It's frustrating because part of me knows I could do a senior teacher job ... Saying 'No' actually creates more stress because you're not doing enough to make your job fulfilling. I'm not working on all four gas burners. The energy banks aren't there. It's a big stress factor. (Jonathon)

For some, coping within negative environments proved impossible. Rebecca

felt so panic-stricken, just the prospect of going in, to pick up some files. I was terrified. Even thinking about it I was shaking, causing me such anxiety I couldn't sleep. I couldn't steel myself to do that. For a while I kept thinking I'd go back, but each time I couldn't get through the door. I felt physically nauseous, very frightened by the atmosphere in school. Going back to the room where I taught, and the area where he groped me, I found extremely difficult. Gradually I came to the conclusion that I wouldn't be able to go back to teaching.

For some, the 'mini-transition' had successful elements. It provided time to consider the future, build confidence and explore alternative horizons. Not all these teachers

however, successfully recovered their ontological security. Jessica, Andrew, Ralph, and Charlotte continued to feel unhappy in their schools and subsequently left, Andrew to teach elsewhere, while Ralph entered industry. Charlotte's burnout was so entrenched that recovery within school was not successful (Cherniss, 1990). She could overcome neither the loss of her previous social network nor the loss of her value system and experienced false renewal, subsequently having a further breakdown. For Jessica, continued abuse in her original school environment continued to attack her identity. 'I didn't really know whether teaching was what I wanted to do. It undermined me so much, I didn't think I was a good teacher any more'. Moves to positive emotional climates were more successful in promoting self-renewal. For some this incurred traversing life transitions.

Factors promoting self-renewal

There was this snowballing of an accumulation of positive things, whereas previously, there'd been an accumulation of negative things. (Terence)

According to Hudson (1991: 94), 'successful transitions simplify, purify, centre, and empower a person's life course. They purge the past and define the future'. Margot and Luke were alone in finding self-renewal through 'embracement' (Snow and Anderson, 1987) within their original working environment. Margot, four years later was

enjoying teaching again. I've learned to say 'No'. I was very much abused, and will make sure I am not abused again. I've a superb timetable next year, no form. Had a marvellous appraisal. It's now: 'How can we help? What can we do to keep you?'

William was the only teacher in my sample unsuccessful in finding a positive working environment through a life transition. At the end of the data-gathering period, he remained very unhappy in his work as a scientific officer in a laboratory for a small firm. Others recovered ontological security through 're-routeing' (Tromans and Woods, 2001).

Maureen's solution was self-employment, where she was able to pursue her own artistic ventures, selling her products through craft fairs. 'Because of all the outside factors outside my control, I couldn't [recover in school] so I felt it was better to take myself out of that situation, and into a situation where I do have control'. Rebecca and Rachel started their own small businesses. Rachel moved from the city to the countryside to set up an art and holiday centre, while Rebecca returned to her artistic roots 'to get through this sense of loss. My painting is very much my identity'. Celia is retraining in music therapy. Emily has moved abroad.

New working identities were constructed through changes in career patterns providing positive emotional experiences. Some of my teachers described how organisational factors helped alter the emotional balance in their lives, allowing them to embrace other roles more in tune with personal ideologies. Terence, within 7 days of obtaining early retirement through ill-health, found employment with a charity where he has remained for several years:

Things started to snowball in a positive direction once I had the courage to apply for this job. It increased more once I got the job. It increased more once I'd started it. ... I'm still excited about the job. I'm thoroughly enjoying it. It's a whole new ballgame, a different professionalism.

Edward too is achieving success working for a charity, creating employment for adults with special needs, a 'co-operative, owned and run by the members. I've slotted into something that suits me down to the ground. It just feels right'. For Gareth, the end of teaching has been 'a doorway' to another 'joyous' way of life making use of his interpersonal skills within the ministry. He declared, 'I'm so excited, so thrilled, so enjoying what I am doing'.

Marcus and Jessica found another school environment with opportunities for rebalancing their emotional lives. Marcus teaches part-time in the private sector, in an 'eccentric' small school, with a 'family atmosphere', where he has a great deal of autonomy and very little administrative workload. The emotional climate in the classroom is more congenial to teaching foreign languages. 'Rapport is very good. The kids are wonderful, no stress'. Students accept boundaries. He is no longer involved in 'crowd control'. Jessica's solution was to accept a post in a smaller comprehensive school. She contrasted her old and new school environments as 'North and South Poles! Totally different atmospheres'. This new environment gives Jessica positive emotional feelings. Her enhanced commitment shines through. 'There's no way I want to leave this place. I'm here 'til they carry me out in a wooden box!'

Optimism and hope were created through working environments characterised by positive emotional climates and higher levels of emotional competencies as exemplified through:

- Positive, 'good' stress

People ask: 'How's the job?' I say: 'Great. I love it'. There are tensions. The pressures are on, but it's stress you enjoy ... I have evening meetings twice a week, much longer than school meetings. I don't notice them, because I'm actually enjoying them. (Terence)

- Supportive, trusting, caring cultures

There's a difference in mentality. Education is more child-centred, people genuinely very friendly. They care. The staff is quite settled, happy. It's got the support of management. They look after each other. I trust them.

(Jessica)

I feel very much at home. It's a much more relaxed, laid back, friendly atmosphere. There's a warm atmosphere, people with a will to make it work. That spins off on me. At school there was so much antagonism, many students actively seeking to stop the system working. The positive vibes are a big help.

(Edward)

- Joint decision-making and collegiality:

My HoF asked: 'What do you think about this options booklet, Jessica?' We read it together, changed bits here and there. At the end of the day I sit down with my technician, sort out what we're going to teach. We work as a team.

There's more a culture of 'we've got to work together' here. No-one says: 'This isn't my job'. (Jessica)

- Ease in communication and good staff/student relationships

We speak to kids. When my head of faculty wants me to do something there's no pressure. He doesn't treat me as though I'm incapable, stupid, thick. He asks me in the morning how I am, then leaves me alone. He wanders in and out of my lessons and I don't feel threatened. He's wonderful. He might very well be coming to check up on me but tells me a joke at the same time!

(Jessica)

- Investment in people and materials

School technology just didn't compare with the modern world. You were scrimping and scraping to get the minimum. Here you get what is right for the job. There's none of this: 'Oh where's the money going to come from?' attitude. Admin staff are computer-literate. The quality just doesn't compare to schools. (Terence)

- Protected time off within the working day

In schools you're more structured. You can't put children into a filing cabinet. You've got to be at lessons at particular times. I have a degree of flexibility. I can take my lunch when I want. I was on duty 5 days a week in

school through lunchtime. It wasn't questioned. Because of that, I insist all staff here take their hour's lunch. They deserve it. (Terence)

- **Variety**

It involves so many different aspects of management, the personnel, the strategic planning, negotiating contracts with firms. There's always a change of scene, all this stimulating stuff as well the routine, suits me fine. (Edward)

- **Fun**

The big thing I enjoy about this school is you can have fun with pupils. You can talk to them, the older ones particularly, on an adult level, have a laugh and a joke with them. (Marcus)

- **Autonomy and de-intensification.**

I decide what I teach. As long as my work fits with the tests, it doesn't matter how I do it. Kids can't do this technological approach to technology without basic skills. My HoF's quite happy in Lower School just to put in basic skills although that really isn't what the technology orders are asking for. (Jessica)

- **Flattened hierarchy**

There's a hierarchy in any organisation, but it's not as autocratic as in schools. The Head was always the Head. He was the boss. The Deputy was his Deputy.

They were more important than the teachers. Despite the changes in society, that structure, even in the most liberal schools, has stuck. You don't get that here. (Terence)

- Building confidence

Most of this job is developing my strengths. The last few years in school seemed to point out my weaknesses, being asked to do things I wasn't good at. What I was good at wasn't being asked of me. There's an awful lot to learn here but I feel I've the potential for learning what I need to know. (Edward)

- Respect

People are respected here. You don't need to cow-tow. You can treat them with the respect that they hold you. Whether you're a receptionist, a caretaker, a finance manager, the director, if they deserve respect, they get respect.

(Terence)

- Emotional learning

I'm learning a lot from my boss, partly from just watching her at work, partly from sessions where she gives me a lot of the background - what each person is like, how she's dealt with them, how I possibly should deal with them. I'm better at anticipating problems. Many people here have serious problems, inter-personal problems blown up out of all proportion, moments of illness, fitting. Sometimes they face you out, anger coming out of every pore,

storming out, slamming doors, punching the wall. It frightens other people. It's quite intimidating. I've needed help from my boss to cope with this because of my inexperience. That's taken my skills in that line to the very limit. I need to get better at that obviously but I'm learning fast. (Edward)

- Good emotion management

You get people very stressed, just lost somebody, and we're here. You're bound to get stressed situations in any organisation, but it can be contained. If somebody wants a moan, they'll have a moan and, good, let them off-load. You're not constrained by the organisation. (Terence)

- Honest emotions

People here are very 'touchy-feely'. They respond to physical contact more because they often don't have the mental capacity to transmit feelings verbally. One of the nice things is that people express their feelings far more than so-called 'normal' situations. Their emotions are close to the surface, very child-like, but that's probably good. They're more human in some ways. They're very aware of each other's feelings. You'll see somebody giving someone else a cuddle because she's upset or he's upset. Quite often men break down in tears. Their emotions take over. They might fall into helpless fits of giggles. Their emotions are that bit bigger and stronger. It's much healthier they're out in the open. They're not as bound by the sort of conventions we are. (Edward)

- Leisure time

Weekends are free. I can now do the conservation voluntary work I love. I'm much more of an asset at home now. I can now be more supportive. Work shouldn't occupy every waking moment and every sleeping moment. I go home with a song and a whistle. (Edward)

Teachers here described organisations where relationships are handled well, with an understanding of the home/work interface, a nurturing culture with time available for individual needs, with role diversity, and the acknowledgement, early recognition and management of 'stress' issues.

The Enhanced Self: Recovering Ontological Security

When cocoons fulfill their functions, butterflies emerge. (Hudson, 1991: 107)

According to Hudson (1991: 69), 'successful self-renewal follows successful cocooning' entailing 'the ability to be self-sustaining, producing confidence, energy, and hope'. The stress experience was ultimately enriching for some of my teachers. Luke declared, 'gradually over the last 5 years I'm a better person for what I've been through'.

The self-renewal process was viewed as empowering, amassing 'more self-knowledge' (Rebecca). 'It did force me to learn some hard lessons about myself' (Celia). Alex talked of 'accepting [his] humanity, [his] historical weaknesses'. Emotional enrichment was gained through regaining emotional competencies such as autonomy, empathy,

awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and dealing with change. Reintegration and realignment (Hudson, 1991) were social processes. As in Smith (1992), Jessica, Gareth, Edward and Terence found positive emotional climates encouraged high levels of emotional competencies, affording sources of confidence, trust, commitment, mutual respect, creativity and innovation, and empowering individual professionalism. Jessica feels

more confident about [her] teaching capability, so much happier in the situation I'm in. I feel valued, not because people pat me on the back, but because people will come and speak to me, discuss something with me, say: 'Yes, that's good. I like that'. That's it, no great praise. That to me means far more, makes me feel as though I belong, that I'm a valuable part of the department.

Alex has enhanced his professional practice through counselling experiences:

It's made me listen more effectively. Before I started it, if I talked to colleagues, I approached it in the wrong way. I've learned different ways to approach things. I want to help people at work. I'm a problem-solver. I won't survive if I try to problem-solve everyone's problems. I've got to move into counselling mode to be more effective, for my own sanity as well as doing the job. Help *them* to identify problems and solve them.

Luke was furthest through the self-renewal process. His narrative shows the importance of skills aiding internalisation processes - incorporating new insights into behaviours (Adams et al, 1976), such as enhanced self-awareness. 'The plus is I'm more aware of

what *I* need rather than what's expected of me'. He recognises emotional distress earlier. 'I can see where my handwriting changes. Different styles tell me quite a lot about myself. It's the emotion of *how* you're writing things'. His 'priorities are different. I know now what I can take on, what I can't'. He has accepted his creative self, outlawed in childhood masculinity. 'I'm back to music again, composing, performing, African drumming. I'm completely free to do it. Even in my sleep I'm writing lyrics'. He acknowledges and utilises different parts of the self:

I wasn't accepting who I was. It was finding parts of my nature I hadn't recognised before, lots of different aspects to me. Part of finding yourself is realising those aspects of your personality are you. You can live with them, try to make the most of what they give you, rather than fighting against them.

Emotion, as an important signal to the self, aids insight:

It's a battle because emotions make me scared. It's when the anxious becomes debilitating, that's the problem. Now I deal with them. I don't fight them. I don't put them away. I explore them and take time to do that. With the experience I've been given, I can put them in a model. Make it more understandable.

Emotion is managed through meditation:

I let my mind drift off. It lets the emotions, the feelings, out of my mind, let's me recognise them, which I can draw on immediately I'm back fully conscious again. When I've done that, I'm ready to move, deal with things

that are making me anxious, not to put them away, but to be able to give myself the strength to cope.

Luke now contributes to facilitating a positive emotional climate within his school. He is able to reciprocate and support others. He recognises early signs of stress in colleagues and students. He can empathise and share emotional experiences, showing others their emotions are 'normal'. He actively campaigns for changes in policy towards stress, and supports local authority initiatives. While he helps others, he recognises when emotional labour becomes emotional toil:

I don't want to become everyone's unloading host. I haven't time. That's going to make me ill as well. I now know when to stop doing that. I only give what I can. I don't give more than I can. I wouldn't have time for myself.

Some of these teachers regained professional identity and self-identity, recovering measures of ontological security. 'I can be me' (Celia). 'If I don't have *my* time then I'm not me and I'll lose me. I've got to recognise that who I am is important to my sanity' (Luke). This was a gradual process. 'It's more like the real me' (Andrew). 'I'm getting emotionally stronger every day, more in control of my life, of what can hurt me now' (Alex).

As I have shown in previous chapters, teachers in my sample experienced profound losses in the self. However, teachers' narratives showed life beyond stress-related illness and burnout. Hudson (1991: 98) argues that life transitions are times 'to *hold on* to what is working in your life, *let go* of what is not working, *take on* new learning and exploration of options, and *move on* to new commitments'. Whether the end result is

growth or decline, depends on the fit between individual and collective adaptational resources and the social context. As Pines et al (1981: 3) suggest 'while burnout can be an extraordinarily painful and distressing experience, as with any difficult event, if properly handled it can not only be overcome, it can be the first step towards increased self-awareness, enriched human understanding, and a precursor of important life changes, growth and development. Accordingly, people who have experienced burnout and have overcome it almost invariably end up in a better, fuller, more exciting life space than if they had not experienced burnout'.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I review what this research has contributed towards the study of teacher stress, teacher emotion, and stress-related illness, and consider implications for future research and policy implications.

The Social Nature of Teacher Stress

This study provides detailed testimony from a small sample of secondary school teachers on social processes influencing teacher stress. We have seen that while teacher stress is experienced individually, teachers viewed its origins in the relationships between personal, organisational and societal factors, and in the interactions between school and home spheres. This research focuses primarily on the relationships between micro and meso factors.

Stress is an inevitable part of teachers' lives (Sergiovanni, 1999). My teachers emphasised their view that *all* teachers within their schools experienced stress, and showed some signs of stress-related illnesses. Stress in the workplace was perceived by these teachers as caused not by individual personality or individual vulnerability, but as primarily due to factors beyond their control within the educational system. The educational reform of the 1980's and 1990's introduced multiple changes to secondary teachers' professional practice and restructured the management of schools. Teachers here described schools as stressed institutions, burning out under great strains from macro, meso, and micro demands. In chapter four I considered some of the struggles these teachers faced in implementing government and school policy and in dealing with the problems such policies have produced for them

individually and collectively. They spoke of intensified roles, the anticipation and aftermath of inspections, appraisal and monitoring, work overload, contrived collegiality, job insecurity, diversification, conflicting roles, pressures to perform, values clash, low support systems, and changing models of the 'good' teacher as key influencers on the stress process. I explored teachers' perceptions of the key roles played by school management and micropolitical processes in creating tensions leading to emotional trauma and stress-related illness. Educational reform has been achieved through the introduction of new management systems, cultures and practices (Ball, 1994). My teachers reported changed school cultures, characterised by low support for employees, with high levels of authoritarianism and/or high levels of autonomy for particular organisational members, resulting in victimization and bullying from both colleagues and students. As in Tehrani (1996), working environments support or prevent the development of caring policies and behaviours, and of victimisation, harassment and bullying through organisational values and behaviours.

In chapter four I also showed how teachers perceived their schools as increasingly filled with negative affect, not just from stressed teachers but also from stressed students. Teachers here spoke of the stressors students face both in their home lives and their school lives, many coming to school to escape the trauma of their home lives. Troubled children caused teachers here a great deal of stress through everyday emotional transactions and through aggressive and abusive behaviours, which were viewed as ineffectively dealt with through school channels. Teachers felt classroom safety and the educational experience was compromised, their own sense of professionalism threatened, by the low levels of emotional competencies of some students who were unable or unwilling to understand emotion rules, and were seen as

disrupting, in some cases controlling, emotional climates within the classroom and the school. This study offers some understanding of why, without a large investment in supportive structures, government aims regarding the inclusion of more pupils with significant special educational needs in mainstream classrooms may not be compatible with the aim of raising academic standards (Norwich and Lunt, 2000).

While teachers here felt inclusion policies were right for many children, every child deserving the opportunity to achieve their potential, the demands on the school day were such that teachers believed schools did not have time or resources to deal effectively with high numbers of troubled children. Many believed there came a time when 'you have to draw lines for their sake, and the teachers' sake' (Rebecca). Teachers here deemed the mandated curriculum as often unsuitable for these children. According to Sir David Winkley (1999), there is 'clearly an important link between emotional balance and future career success'. My teachers felt unable to perform the emotional labouring required to foster emotional learning in their students, many of whom required one-to-one attention, which were not available. They were unable to develop empathic relationships. Teachers invoked 'battle' discourse to describe their daily lives. Crowd control, rather than teaching and learning, was a major feature of the school day. Structural constraints meant they constantly felt unsuccessful in teaching all ranges of the ability spectrum, particularly mixed ability classes, and the lowest ability levels.

Teachers also experienced stress within their family lives. In chapter 5, I considered how post-modern demands create stress for teachers and their families. This study demonstrates the continuing pressures on working women in particular in balancing the conflicting demands of working and home spheres. Despite the changes in

working routines and time schedules, the women in this sample still held primary responsibility for organising and carrying out homecare, childcare, elder care (of both their own parents and their parents-in-law), spousal care, and the emotion work in the home. This research also shows the pressures some men experience particularly when they do not have partners carrying out these tasks in the home. The demands of the home sphere thus increased levels of emotional labouring and emotion work, and consumed emotional capital.

Several teachers here felt their stress-related illness was due to the interaction of stressors within their working and home lives. As schools became troubled emotional arenas, teachers in this sample felt the 'quality of life inside and outside the classroom deteriorated rapidly' (Marcus). I explored how spillover emotion contaminates working and home spheres, and how this affects family structures leading to the experience of family burnout. This study shows the dynamic relationship between the individual and the environment, with multiple feedback loops influencing the course of the stress process. Neither family nor working spheres functioned as a refuge, emotional transactions within family life often compounding problems within the working sphere, and vice versa.

The Social Nature of Teacher Emotion

This research presents evidence on emotional processes influencing stress-related illness, showing that a consideration of emotion is a fruitful way of gaining insight into stress and stress-related illness and the emotions of educational change. It explores how teachers feel about their work, and how emotion within schools impacts on teachers' work in ways that are stress-producing. This has previously been a

neglected area of study. Very little attention has been given to how individual teacher emotion relates to collective emotion within schools. The micro-political perspective of this study shows how emotion relates to organisational performance, and, as in Jeffrey and Woods (1996), Troman (1997), and Hargreaves (1998a), demonstrates that how teachers feel about their work influences their professional practice and their continuance in teaching. This research gives some insight into why there have indeed been profound changes in teachers' emotionality (Nias, 1996). Teachers' testimonies unveil the tremendous cognitive and emotive activity employed by teachers in inhibiting and manufacturing inner and outer feelings in order to maintain the ideal of the 'good' teacher required by new management cultures (Hochschild, 1979, 1983).

My research supports the view that emotions are manufactured within ongoing relational processes and interdependencies. Teachers' testimony reveals that emotions are negotiated during the course of social encounters. I have shown how teachers' experiences within actual emotional episodes in the classroom and the school demonstrate the interdependence of thought, feeling, and action, and how these processes are linked to social transactions within the past, the present, and the future. Emotions are part of the evaluative process, inextricably linked to cognition. In this study, primary and secondary appraisal and re-appraisal processes influenced outcomes and emotional wellbeing within threatening emotional climates. The interventions of others, actual and anticipated, influenced assessments, indicating appraisals are social processes linked to power and status relations within the changing social matrix (Kemper, 1978, 1993).

This study supports the view that emotions are communicative processes, providing information regarding personal and social identity claims to the self and to others

(Parkinson, 1996). High emotional states and trauma may signify individual and organisational turbulence, derived from strains and tensions within institutions. Emotional episodes experienced by these teachers within Castlerigg and Walton Green suggest that 'troubled' individuals were bound to 'troubled' organisations (Obholzer and Roberts, 1994). Furthermore, my study, supporting research findings in other fields (Fineman, 1993), suggests that emotion is an important social ordering mechanism in shaping and controlling social transactions within managerialist practice. Emotion norms within the school can thus be seen as outcomes of policies and practices. The social habitus within both the school and the home provided environments prescribing and proscribing emotion production and regulation. However, I have also shown that emotion can be the locus of resistance. Emotion rules and practices may also be opposed, and therefore subject to instability and revision. Management constructs of emotion were not wholly adopted. For example, tensions developed between upper management, middle management and classroom teachers, between the 'old school', such as Edward, Maureen, Andrew, Marcus and Terence, and the 'new professionals' (Troman, 2000), for example Luke, Margot, Alex and Jonathon.

This study has produced some insight into theories of emotional labour and emotion work, *emotional capital*, *emotional climates*, and *emotional literacy*. It demonstrates the need to maintain the distinction between emotional labour concerning efforts made by the self on the self, and emotion work concerning efforts either made by others on the self, or by the self on the emotions of others. This research supports Lee Trewick (1996) and Tolich (1993) in demonstrating that emotional labour and emotion work have both liberating and alienating elements. When autonomous, teachers' experiences show that these can be empowering devices, creating positive

emotional experiences and social order within the classroom. However, when used as a management tool in support of managerial goals and purposes, or by disruptive students, they play central strategic roles in controlling, defining, and organising teacher behaviour both in the classroom and school-wide. Testimonies thus suggest that management employ emotion work in efforts to maintain control over the emotional climate of their organisation that then results in much emotional labour for individual teachers.

Data from this sample suggests that certain types of emotion work within schools are gendered. It was women teachers who primarily consumed emotional capital in carrying out emotion work with both troubled students and troubled members of staff. The women teachers here felt emotion work was part of their remit as teachers and colleagues, and keenly felt the loss of time to carry out such work. Some of the male teachers here felt that either these aspects were not their responsibility, or that their skills were insufficient. Ralph spoke of the 'feminisation of teaching', and the threat this posed for male teachers, who still expected female colleagues to perform the caring roles in school. The males in this study in particular felt the interpersonal skills demanded both in collaborative teamworking, and in caring for high numbers of EBD students, traditionally associated with females, were not within their grasp. For example, Andrew and Marcus, who had come into teaching to 'teach [their] subject', felt they were now expected also to have the skills of a social worker. They did not want to have to develop the skills associated with this role. Edward, on the other hand, comfortable teaching girls, found, in a mixed-sex school, he was expected to play the 'macho' male role, with which he felt alien. He felt a loss of respect from working class boys. His caring side was submerged, compounding his loss of identity. Jonathon was right in suggesting I would find that a main factor in the creation of

stress was his co-ordinator's role, with its need for high levels of interpersonal skills, and which places the holder at the interface of macro, meso, and micro levels. Alex, for instance, felt his interpersonal skills were not developed enough to manage the human resources within his department. Since these skills were not part of teachers' professional development, he added to his own personal growth by actively seeking these skills externally through counselling courses in his own time.

The high demands of emotional labour and emotion work reduced teachers' capacity to conserve and build emotional capital. Negative affect was sustained through recursive loops between school emotional climates, individual and collective emotional competencies and abusive relationships with colleagues and students, maintaining a stressful environment.

As I have shown in chapter four, schools were perceived as possessing negative emotional climates, characterised by fear, low trust, blame, low respect and chronic anxiety. Teachers here felt they were often not in control of the emotional climate either within their classrooms or their schools. They perceived schools as low in emotional literacy and emotional resilience, as lacking mechanisms such as individual and collective emotional competencies in managing change, participative decision-making, communication and managing conflict, protective in preventing burnout (Coles, 1997b). There were perceptions of low levels of individual and collective emotional awareness, regulation and motivation, and confidence. Collective social competencies, such as empathy and social skills in handling relationships, were largely absent. Providing support to stressed colleagues and students consumed emotional capital. Teachers introducing new curriculum practices, and those

supporting colleagues, felt ill equipped to deal with the emotion work involved in managing teacher resistance.

This study argues that emotional literacy is both an individual and a social concept. The experience of stress lowered teachers' levels of emotional competencies. Through negative social transactions, they lost self-awareness, confidence, and motivation. They then became less able to handle relationships, to manage emotions, to make personal decisions, and to empathise and communicate effectively. They became less able to learn, less able to cope with the strains and tensions inherent in school life, and often became viewed as disruptive elements within the school and home environments (Reed, 1997). Some teachers, like Edward, Marcus, Luke and Alex, felt that before their experience of stress-related illness, they did not possess high levels of emotional literacy. Neither experiences in the home and schooling, nor teacher training nor the teaching experience had provided emotional resources or training. Alex argued that problems within schools may have little to do with incompetent teachers but are largely due to schools having insufficient skills and resources to deal with human relations. As Hudson (1991:44) contends, 'adults need not only knowledge and training to make the changing external world work but self-knowledge and training to make the internal world effective'. However, unlike other spheres in commerce and industry, professional development and directed time for teachers to acquire and practice emotional and practical skills was not forthcoming. As several of these teachers pointed out, both primary and secondary schools have lost the capacity to provide time and resources for enabling the development of emotional literacy. Teachers here suggested schools are in the forefront, increasingly confronting and dealing with the emotional well-being of students and staff. Dealing with organisational stressors within schools requires a full complement of emotional

competencies. However, as Hargreaves and Fullan (1998: 34) maintain, 'many schools are poor cultivators of emotional intelligence'. Evidence here suggests that some schools are poor cultivators of emotional intelligence not only in students but also in teachers. Teachers offer the young a mirror of the adult world at work, through the ways they work together in school, how they understand and manage boundaries, develop interpersonal relationships, and communicate their own values. As Ros Bayley, an educational consultant, cited in Phillips (1999) asserts, 'You can't foster in others what you don't have yourself. You have to start with the teachers and enable them to be emotionally literate'.

It could be said that school managers, in managing school emotion through removing negativity, were justified in eradicating conflict through removing those who might be viewed as not fitting in with new organisational goals and purposes. However, many of these teachers were enthusiastic about much educational change but deeply worried about its implementation. Commonly held discourses on the management of negative emotion such as anger, influenced by beliefs and values, expectations and knowledges, often emphasise the regulation of emotional influences seen as irrational (Sousa, 1987). As Blackmore (1996: 338) argues 'the expression of emotion serves a communicative role in developing a sense of community, a tolerance of ambiguity, and greater understanding through empathy'. Furthermore, emotion, as a 'form of boundary maintenance work to control workers' continues to be individualised, represented as irrational and subjective, detrimental to a 'sense of community on political, moral or social terms' (ibid). As Jonathon and Alex pointed out, in Walton Green, the adoption of individualised approaches, in discounting the value of emotion as an important facilitator and indicator of thinking (Salovey & Sluyter, 1997), reduced key organisational emotional competencies, such as emotional awareness and

empathy (Goleman, 1998), inhibiting problem recognition and resolution. A discourse of individual responsibility encourages individual pathologisation. As Veninga and Spradley (1993:6) write, 'like a thief in the night, work stress robs millions of workers of their health and happiness, then goes scot-free while the blame lies elsewhere'.

The Social Nature of Stress-related Illness

This research explores the experience of stress-related illness through examining teachers' perceptions of the downward and upward phases of the illness trajectory. In chapter three, I argue that stress-related illness is a social process, influenced by relational and organisational practices within the home and the workplace. Teachers' accounts support the biopsychosocial model of health, which encompasses the biomedical model (structural weaknesses, viral and bacterial infections, neurophysiological processes), psychological components, and sociological and cultural factors (Bartlett, 1998). We have seen that beliefs about stress-related illness change through the illness process, and how individual and collective ideas about illness may be socially generated, questioned and modified.

Biographical disruption (Williams, 2000) ensued as teacher health was profoundly damaged by the experience of stress. Teachers reported a decrease in positive health behaviours, and an increase in emotional destabilisation, with negative health behaviours threatening well-being, and reducing the ability to fight further stressors and infection. This study suggests that individualised discourses emphasising hormonal explanations for women's ill-health in mid-life hinder accurate early diagnosis of stress-related illness. Furthermore, within this sample, women's ill-

health tended to be associated with mental distress, while men's ill-health tended to be associated with physical illnesses. Males in this sample tended to avoid seeking help until very late in the downward phase of the trajectory. The experience of stress-related illness was thus gendered.

This research shows the continuing importance of the workplace in shaping identity (Casey, 1995). Teachers' ontological security was marred by threats to identities, producing great cognitive and emotive dissonance (Giddens, 1991; Hochschild, 1979). What a 'good teacher' should now be, how 'good' teachers should now think, feel, and act, did not concur with these teachers' beliefs about their own behaviour, thinking and feeling. This led some here to believe they were no longer 'good' teachers, leading to increased feelings of loss, anxiety and depression.

My teachers acknowledged that their professional practice was compromised as they succumbed to stress-related illnesses and their own emotional competencies were lowered in consequence. They were less successful in managing stressful encounters with colleagues and students. Teacher stress impacted negatively on learning situations. The experience of stress fed feelings of failure and increased losses in classroom management, reducing levels of competency. Some students were reported as vociferous in their complaints that stressed teachers spent much of their time on classroom disruptions, and were less capable of providing them with a good education.

Teachers here acknowledged that school management faced overwhelming dilemmas. School reputations, human resource management, budget requirements, the financial implications of providing for stress-related illness cover, student attainment, league

tables, and the intense competition for students were viewed as irreconcilable issues. Schools here were faced with teachers who were unfit to teach due to ill health. Having teachers crying in corridors and toilets could be viewed as threatening school effectiveness and reputations. Schools feared the 'failing' label. They could not afford accusations of 'poor teaching', and threats to student achievement. Some schools in this sample seem to have felt the need both to protect themselves from accusations of lowered student achievement, and to protect teachers from further harm. Teachers perceived greater emphasis placed on protecting school reputations than on protecting teachers. On the other hand, the experiences of William, Emily and Stephen suggest that the threat of competency procedures could be viewed as safeguarding both teacher health and school reputation. Both William and Stephen were warned that competency procedures would be implemented if they insisted on returning to school. As William's wife Lindsey explained, stress exacerbated William's hearing difficulties. His speech became indistinct. There were specific health and safety issues in his continued working in a practical classroom environment with large groups of teenagers. Despite these problems, William insisted on maintaining his teaching commitment. The threat of competency proceedings was probably necessary to stop him returning to school. As Earnshaw and Cooper (1996: 113) write, 'at the end of the day, employers cannot be expected to employ indefinitely individuals who are incapable of carrying out their jobs. ... It may be more prudent to opt for dismissal rather than let him or her run the risk of stress-related illness.'

On the other hand, as I show in chapter 6, teachers' testimonies revealed their strong beliefs that the actions of management were key contributors to stress-related illness. Teachers understood they would not have 'hit the wall' (Veninga and Spradley, 1993) had stress been a recognised health and safety issue within their schools. However,

according to these teachers, stress was not viewed as a legitimate illness either by themselves or by management. When doctors advised taking extended time off for recovery, this was generally discounted. Teacher health was put in jeopardy through a) their own insistence on returning to school too soon, and b) school pressures on them to return. Partly due to perceived guilt about absence, such as failing their students and increasing the load on colleagues, fears regarding competency, and the stigma relating to mental health issues, these teachers typically took only two weeks absence when first diagnosed. Teachers feared dismissal on the grounds of incompetency, 'the six-week rule' (Luke). They believed the responsibility for employee well-being is not only a legal issue, but also a moral and practical one. They questioned whether schools had a right to 'grind teachers into the ground'. They viewed schools as holding an ethical responsibility towards employees. It might be said that strategies adopted by some schools were in place to ensure some of these teachers left teaching. However, teachers here felt there are better ways of persuading those labelled 'dinosaurs' to leave. This also applies to those whose bodies begin to fail. For example, William's hearing problems were a significant factor in his losing control over classroom management. However, there were no policies to deal flexibly with staff health problems.

Furthermore, schools were perceived as not carrying out their obligations under MHSW regulations. Unmanageable pressures in the face of restructuring, new legislation, increased bureaucracy, and bewildering new initiatives reduced the capacity to implement practices and policies protecting the health of some employees and some students. Teachers here believed both they and their schools had failed in their 'duty of care' towards both teachers and students. I have shown that some of these teachers perceived they were subjected to severe forms of work abuse. Some

spoke of gathering evidence for possible future litigation, which they, and their union representatives, felt might be the likely future action. However, as Terence and his wife Alicia for example, explained, when teachers are so ill with stress-related illness, it may be thought inadvisable to take legal action. This causes further stress, aggravating already weakened bodies, threatening health further.

In Chapter 7 I argue that recovery and self-renewal are social processes. Since organisations play their part in contributing to onset of illness they also hold some responsibility for the self-renewal process (Fassel, 1992). Rebuilding emotional capital was difficult, often impossible, when teachers returned to negative emotional climates, with no solidarity to develop collective ways of coping. Ralph, Margot, Alex, Andrew and Jonathon, for example, found stress increased on their return to work as their working day and timetables were restructured for financial and school discipline reasons. For some, like Charlotte and Emily, the loss of prized social networks could not be overcome. For women in particular, social networks within working environments can be crucial in maintaining identity and emotional capital (Bulan, 1997). Those adopting a more individualised focus from Western individualistic stress discourses tended to find the recovery process more problematic, while those finding recovery easier tended to adopt a more organisationally based discourse regarding stress, often derived from the experience of union activities or other employment arenas.

Finding positive emotional experiences was crucial to self-renewal. As Terence's, Edward's, and Jessica's experiences show, emotional competencies are often quickly rebuilt through positive emotional transactions within organisational contexts, Jessica and Terence in particular, blossoming within organisations with positive emotional

climates. I argue that the stress experience can be a fruitful learning experience. The few teachers who had traversed successful renewal trajectories by the end of the interviewing process, felt that they had become 'better persons', their experiences generating much emotional competency and wisdom, which they were now applying successfully in their working and home environments. Through the experience of stress-related illness, they felt they had become aware that the needs of teaching today required high levels of such skills both in order to be effective in social transactions with students and colleagues, and to facilitate students' emotional learning. Through self-renewal processes within a new environment, Edward found social transactions facilitated the practice and development of emotional competencies through supportive networks and professional development. Luke and Alex had actively pursued the acquisition of skills, improving their own emotional resilience. They believed this was both protective against further stress-related illness, in particular in improving their own self-awareness, and instrumental in helping them build collective adaptational resources and coping strategies with colleagues. Emotional competencies can thus be learned.

Stress was a cyclical process. Structural and organisational factors within the workplace were reported as producing stressors, which impacted negatively on teachers' emotional lives, leading to stress-related illness, which fed into the stress downward spiral by increasing the number and nature of negative emotional transactions with colleagues and students, feeding stress-related illness, and so on. Changed emotional climates inspired low levels of individual and collective emotional competencies (Smith, 1992), increasing emotional labour, and contributing to levels of organisational stress, recursively impacting negatively on emotional

climates. The affective components of stress were both resultant from, and contributors to, the micro-political life of schools.

I have shown that both personal and collective emotional phenomena influenced the experience of stress. My research demonstrates the interdependency of personal and collective emotional competencies. It suggests that understanding negative and positive emotion, and addressing the problems negative emotion indicates, may be more fruitful for organisational health and for productivity than disregard, repression or removal. The study of emotion and stress-related illness provides insight into the social and cultural underpinnings of health and illness, where psychosocial mechanisms link the individual body and the illness experience to social structures, to social and political phenomena within schools and the home, to power relations, status and emotion within organisations. As Blackmore (1996) points out, the emotional landscapes of teaching are not only shaped by individuals, but also by social, political and institutional forces. Teacher stress is thus a public issue, socially generated within relational and organisational processes. The individual, the organisation and society can be seen as foci for intervention.

Implications for Future Research

These research findings are based on twenty-one case studies, from a self-selecting snowball sample. It might be argued that this sample is atypical of teachers suffering stress. However, considerable numbers of teachers are reported as suffering from stress and stress-related problems (Travers and Cooper, 1996), or have left teaching due to ill-health (MacLeod and Meikle, 1994). The Cabinet Office inquiry (1998) into 'Managing Attendance in the Public Sector' reveals government interest in managing

sickness and absence rates, 'ill-health retirement and absenteeism among teachers' being one area of research prioritised by the DfEE (*Education Journal*, 1999:31). It might therefore be said that these teachers, in experiencing issues all teachers face to some degree rather than as unique to themselves, are 'critical cases' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995).

Furthermore, it might be argued that these teachers were in some way personally emotionally 'vulnerable', or professionally 'incompetent'. Edward, Marcus, and Emily had previously felt dissatisfied with the teaching experience and had tried to find alternative ventures, 'falling back' into teaching when these proved unsatisfactory or unattainable. Emily in particular felt she was 'not suited' to the job she took on, but 'needed the money'. Edward's analysis was that he had burned out at least ten years before, a time when he explored moving into school/industry liaison but was unable to obtain funding. However, the rest of these teachers, apart from NQT Morag, had had lengthy careers with many happy years in teaching and records of successful appraisals, inspections, and examination results. Margot, for example, was one of the first teachers to be awarded an Award of Excellence payment (which she refused as divisive) for her success. 'Our department got the best report [Ofsted] the Head had ever read ... I took 72 students through GCSE, 52 were entered for the exam ... an 88% pass rate' (Margot). 'The year before last', Jonathon's 'A Level results were just about the best in the school, absolutely phenomenal'.

My research is also based on individual memories. The longitudinal bases, plus interviews with family members, aided the establishment of the veracity of accounts. Data from several interviewees within two schools gave insight into organisational affect. However, it must be acknowledged that no experience 'is ever as unified, as

knowable, as universal and as stable as we assume it to be ... Belief in the truth of experience is as much an ideological production as belief in the experience of Truth' (Fuss, 1989: 114). One of the problems researching stress-related illness is that people experiencing stress/burnout may begin to see everything in a negative light. Indeed Maslach and Schaufeli (1993) found interviewees reported poor employment conditions whether they were poor or not. While it was more difficult collecting examples of positive experiences as they tended to focus on negative cases, teachers here were able to give instances within teaching which had given them great fun and joy. As with Brown (1996), I argue against the position that stress-related illness and negativity necessarily lead to malcognitions. Maureen, Ralph and Alex for example, were aware of situations when their own negativity influenced their perceptions. However, in other instances, increases in negativity may be seen as a reflection of changing working conditions and practices, and changes in attitude towards the profession. Through interviewing teachers in all stages of the trajectory, it was clearer to see, particularly in self-renewal processes, that teachers believed their own negative feelings were related to real-time social transactions and to organisational affect.

The timed nature of PhD study means that potential avenues of inquiry must be terminated. Several teachers were the sole interviewees from their schools. It would have been useful to add their colleagues to the comparative base. I had access to teachers in two schools. In neither of these schools was I able to find teachers who felt they were successfully adapting to educational change, and were willing to be interviewed. It would also have been interesting to investigate how students feel about being taught by stressed teachers, and how management in these cases viewed stress-related illness and the emotions within their organisations. In Walton Green,

the teachers involved did not want their Head interviewed due to fears of exposure. In Castlerigg, I approached the new Head, but the opportunity to take part was declined due to ongoing issues. I was unable to gain access to teachers in a secondary school where stress and stress-related illness were not negative features of working life. I would liked to have made an in-depth longitudinal study of two schools, one experiencing problems in dealing with stress, the other successfully dealing with stress, combining interviews with observation. However, the workloads involved in all these cases mean that they are better seen as future research projects.

This study gives some indication as to why some teachers suffer burnout. There was much emphasis on gendered responses to organisational demands, to the types of masculinities embedded within managerial discourse and practice (Collinson and Hearn, 1994), to gender and stress (Clark et al, 1994) and to gendered constructions of cultures (Harlow and Hearn, 1995). It has been argued that for many men, due to brain structure and lateralisation, the interpersonal skills necessary for much emotional labour and emotion work cannot be learned to a high enough level for use in the workplace (Gurr, 1998). Others feel this hypothesis has more to do with ideological considerations than scientific analysis (Goleman, 1998). Further research on gendered perspectives might prove fruitful.

PhD study can be a traumatic experience for the researcher. In over one hundred and thirty interviews I maintained my analytical distance (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995) on all occasions but three. Reliving someone else's emotion presents dangers in terms of issues surrounding, for example, transference and counter-transference, and in opening up the interviewer's own 'can of worms' (Nias, 1996; Carlyle, 1998). I had gradually built up a large voice repertoire (see appendix 1) through learning

derived from emotionally traumatic transactions within public and private life, and through professional development. While I feel this breadth of background increases the skills necessary for carrying out sensitive research on vulnerable populations, it also increases personal vulnerability. Our own 'worms' may be well hidden. Two interviews, one with Luke, where he talked about 'being true to himself', and another with Charlotte, where she smoked cannabis to which I am extremely sensitive, caused me to question my own life, resulting in such distress over my own identity that I had three weeks' absence from work. At this time the counselling provided within the research design had ceased (see appendix 1).

I found it very difficult to write about the interviews causing me to confront my own 'ghosts' (Ely et al, 1991). I still do. After delivering a paper partly dealing with this aspect of research at the *Ethnography and Education* conference, Oxford, I was approached by several women who revealed they had encountered similar circumstances where they became too close to interviewees, but had found this difficult to disclose openly. We listened to each other, offering a supportive ear. No men offered similar disclosure. I know that men do get this close, their 'worms' sometimes surfacing (Warren, 1988). I suspect these aspects may often be hidden, perhaps for similar reasons to those impelling teachers to hide stress-related issues due to their links with failure and competency. Getting too close to our participants, or 'allowing' the emotions of others to influence our own emotion state, can be viewed as a threat to research where we are supposed to maintain our professional distance to achieve 'disciplined subjectivity'. However, I believe that in researching emotion this is a risk we must take. Too much distance means lesser quality of data. The balance between too much and too little distance can be so fine that it is crossed.

Student researchers in particular are vulnerable, being outside the remit of MHSW Regulations (see chapter 6). While many people work within teams, team members do not always have the skills to deal with deep emotional issues. In many service occupations, such as housing and social work, forms of work counselling are part of formal working conditions. Here emotion within the workplace is discussed and worked through with peers in safety. However, as in primary and secondary schools, formal provision for exploring and handling workplace emotional issues may be absent within research schools. Researchers require protection from formal systems designed to explore and process the emotions that emerge through exploring sensitive issues.

The emotions of the researcher are also valuable tools for data analysis (Young and Lee, 1996; Harris, 1997). Formal workplace counselling is not only a protective resource but may also be beneficial as a research tool. For me exploring transference and counter-transference issues with my counsellor was invaluable both in research terms and personally. Counter-transference cannot be adequately explored alone. While I have a huge amount of emotion data, I could have had so much more, understood transactions more fully had I had more sessions with a trained workplace counsellor, and if I had taped, transcribed and analysed conversations with her.

My study has combined insights from both sociological and psychological theory and practice. We need more multidisciplinary research, based on real life situations, 'fly-on-the-wall' studies, plus in-depth individual and group studies, the researcher having the skills to reach beneath conscious levels of awareness (Stapley, 1996).

Policy Implications

We have seen that sources of teacher stress lie in the affective dimensions within schools. I argue that stress is not simply an issue of personal vulnerabilities, nor of organisational aspects, but is caused by 'ecological dysfunction' (Hopkins, 1997), by a combination of personal, social, cultural, economic and political change within and outside the organisation.

Teachers here were profoundly physically, psychologically and emotionally damaged by the experience of stress, many believing their long-term health was impaired. Teacher stress also holds a high price for the educational system in the forms of teacher competency, student achievement, and financial costs to individual schools and to the economy. Many stress reduction interventions focus on individuals accommodating to the environment. This is largely unsuccessful as a long-term strategy. As Handy (1990: 26) argues '... the individually-oriented analyses and intervention strategies proposed by many stress or burnout researchers may simply divert attention away from organisational issues and help perpetuate the very problems they are designed to solve'. While there are instances where individual interventions may be valuable coping strategies, since the causes of stress so often lie outside personal control, more successful solutions can be found in adapting the culture, structure and functioning of the organisation. As Graham Clayton, an NUT solicitor, cited in Comerford and Mansell (1999), argues, 'we are looking for a cure not a remedy. ... It is not the fault of the individual. It is the fault of the system'.

This study, therefore, holds implications for policies affecting teachers' work at individual, organisational and societal levels.

At the individual level, teachers can increase their knowledge of stress and stress-related issues. Since teaching is commonly known to be a stressful occupation, teachers need a higher awareness of sources of stress, symptoms, the range of coping strategies and the ways in which these can be constructive or counterproductive, and avenues of help. Increased knowledge will reduce feelings of self-blame, and protect somewhat against the loss of self, as well as giving understanding of the merits and disadvantages of various stress discourses. However, the experiences of Maureen, Charlotte and Stephen show that, when stress is already threatening health and wellbeing, this type of information may allow the stressed teacher to stay longer in post before 'hitting the wall', but may not be successful in the long-term without accompanying changes in school policies.

As with some of Troman and Woods' (2001) sample of primary teachers, and like Terence in my sample, teachers may find it helpful to seek alliances with others. Peer group discussion can offer the opportunity to dissipate stress, while its absence may allow problems to grow (Robertson, 1993). Life-long learning can be pursued both inside and outside the organisation (for example, Luke and Alex), professional development providing a buffer against stress (Rudow, 1995). Individual teachers can learn to increase personal and social emotional competencies such as self-awareness, empathy and communication. They can listen to others, and care for colleagues, rather than censure those who are not coping.

I have shown how individual teacher-based solutions tend to depoliticise stress, failing to account for the effects of collective working experiences and practices,

where shared perceptions, thoughts, feelings and actions, may produce collective adaptational processes, effecting organisational health. Interventions at the school policy level are therefore needed to prevent and deal with the experience of stress.

The school level

For these teachers, emotional transactions in school were directly linked to illness within long-term chronic wearing down processes, and as acute catalysts triggering breakdown. Recent court cases publicising litigation has alerted local authorities, heads and governors to the risks of ignoring teacher stress. It is increasingly acknowledged that employers hold much responsibility for the welfare of their workers, who are their most important asset (Coles, 1997b). One of the key preventive mechanisms is the creation of a healthy workplace.

A healthy workplace is characterised by the principles of total quality management (TQM), which directs action to the process of work rather than the workers (Taylor and Hill, 1993; Hearnshaw et al, 1998). TQM is a 'participative, systematic approach to planning and implementing a continuous organisational improvement process' (Kaluzny et al, 1992). This requires the creation of a culture of safety, where stress is openly acknowledged without fears of stigma, failure, or threats to personal competency, where errors are accepted as part of the organisational learning process, and where trust, honesty, care, decency, passion, warmth, fun, challenge and excitement, contribute to the creation of positive emotional climates (Henry, 1994). The American state of Georgia, for example, has successfully implemented TQM as a 'reform vehicle', this bottom-up approach eliminating much of the distress within their schools (Weller and Hartley, 1994).

Developing collaborative cultures based on participative decision-making and with a common mission can thus be helpful in eliminating stress. 'Macho' management styles common in many schools (Court, 1994), often criticised for creating low trust corporate cultures that lower productivity and staff morale and increase anxiety, are 'the antithesis' of the 'new work order' (Helsby, 1999: 65). According to Professor Gareth Jones of Henley Management College, cited in Coles (1997c), such 'mercenary' cultures, were common in early 1980's capitalist enterprises. Obsessed with measuring standards and outcomes, their narrow focus, task-orientation, external and internal competitiveness, low co-operation and intolerance of poor performance and dissent leads to negative emotional climates. Teachers in Walton Green felt managerialistic forms of monitoring and appraisal are too often concerned with surveillance and finding fault, rather than rewarding success and increasing feelings of self-efficacy. Teachers need constructive feedback on their professional practice, recognition and praise. Good teaching requires emotional bonding. Teachers need time to develop satisfying emotional relationships with both students and colleagues. In industrial settings there is more emphasis on the development of 'softer' management styles where 'people firms are happier firms' (Gomer, 1999: 1), the accent on investing in staff through providing a range of services such as flexible benefits packages, career breaks, career advice, time for reflection and learning opportunities.

Negative emotional climates are a result of the ways state-sponsored reform has been implemented, causing teachers and management much frustration. Headteachers and the senior management team's hold key roles in balancing the introduction of reform initiatives, in organising and maintaining commitment to stress reduction policies. Tim Gallagher, for example, cited in Revell (2000), head of the King's school,

Wolverhampton, part of the government's Fresh Start programme, argues that while good management cannot eliminate stress, it can identify stress at an earlier stage, and create working conditions which reduce the stress for teachers. Among his first tasks at this school were addressing the long hours' culture, introducing a 'no-blame' culture, reducing the climate of fear by giving all the old staff job security, instituting regular staff development reviews which 'celebrate strengths and identify needs', and accepting that stressed teachers need time to recover and time to gradually ease back into their jobs.

Headteachers need high levels of emotional literacy, skills in the emotions of leadership, and in human resource management. 'Duty of care' responsibilities under MHSW Regulations (see chapter 6) could be taken more seriously. Control over school policy can be shared. The prevention of stress incurs handing some control back to teachers at the chalkface. Since the overall quality of life depends on 'the sum of the perceived quality of work life and the perceived quality of home life' (Rice, 1984: 172), greater appreciation of how the home/work interface influences employee health and efficiency would be helpful.

Some headteachers might well achieve a better balance between the values they wish to promote and the values of their staff (Coles, 1997c). Some teachers may be unable or unwilling to adapt to new ways of working, or to a new corporate culture. For those who do not fit new cultures, formal ways of easing them into new employment areas without abusing them would be more humane than creating threats to health. Teachers in this sample felt that their skills as teachers were not transferable. However, those who found new careers show that this was not so. If teaching is no

longer a 'job for life', then school and external agencies dealing with 'outplacement', could provide advice, creating portfolios, and arranging interviews and training.

By the time stress-related illness was acknowledged it was so entwined with other problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, heart disease, diabetes, and mental illness it was difficult to separate causal influences. Stress must be recognised earlier (Veninga and Spradely, 1981). This involves both individuals and school management increasing their awareness and empathic skills. One of the main problems within teaching is that teachers are tied to a particular location, with a non-stop working day. Schools do not share the same playing field as most businesses. Breaking the burnout cycle is a resource issue, as Luke's experiences (chapter 6) show. Most schools do not have the financial and time resources to implement many of the strategies advocated by organisational approaches to stress. Many of these changes cannot occur without policy changes at societal levels. Changes with policy at the educational system level are required to tackle teacher stress.

Educational system level

Teachers require more professional autonomy and self-determination. As Carol Adams (2000), chief executive of the GTC, argues, 'Education policy should be shaped in the classroom. We need to give teachers back their creativity and autonomy'. Troman and Woods (2001: 138) argue for 'a public restoration of trust in teachers and teaching' in order to improve teachers' working experiences and the quality of education provision.

Teachers themselves need to be involved in school-wide stress reduction processes. This requires directed time away from teaching responsibilities. Both Norfolk County Council and Northamptonshire County Council offer 'well-being programmes' programmes to both schools and individual teachers (Arkin, 1999). Schools need to be prepared for increases in short-term absence as teachers become more confident in revealing their feelings and in taking time off (ibid). However, initiatives organised by local authority health managers, for example within Walton Green, fail when they are used as 'sticking plaster', and direct attention towards individuals rather than organisational issues. Many purportedly organisational strategies such as Employee Assistance Programmes are essentially individual approaches administered collectively (Smith, 1998).

Funding systems are inequitable. Policies such as the provision of mentoring for students and teachers have positive aspects, but in practice are difficult to sustain due to the lack of skilled personnel and directed time. Increased funding would be required to implement stress reduction policies, to reduce teacher workloads and set up formal support systems where emotional and practical support is offered not only internally through features such as peer counselling systems but also externally, in non-threatening environments outside school management control. More non-contact time might help develop collaborative relationships. This requires commitment and provision through statutory requirements within local and national policy.

Inclusion policies integrating EBD children are failing due to lack of resources. Schools not only need extra funding to acquire learning support staff, they also need directed time for liaison between learning support assistants, teachers and special

needs teams. More trained and well paid learning support staff are needed. This requires recruitment and training facilities.

More attention needs to be paid to emotional dimensions with an emphasis on fostering emotional literacy in both students and teachers. High levels of emotional literacy and positive emotional climates reinforce each other. This has implications for the acquisition of emotional skills in teacher training, in the probationary period of teaching, and in life long learning through professional development.

Successful restructuring thus necessitates paying greater attention to the human factors of educational provision. Basic needs include nurturing staff, viewing employees as valuable resources not expendable commodities, professional development emphasising social and emotional learning, time to reflect, an acceptance that *all* people at *all* levels are vulnerable at particular times in particular situations, and, if necessary, empowering and enabling people to leave by providing information, knowledge and training. As Smith (1998: 9) advocates, all organisations, in order to protect employees, need to 'recognise and provide for the vulnerability and idiosyncrasies of their people', ensuring 'a good home-work interface' and adopting more effective organisational approaches,

rooted in a fundamental understanding of what it means to be a human being (not just an employee), with all our conscious and unconscious responses to our situation. ... We are all responsible not only for ourselves, but for each other (p.7) What is needed above all is an organisation-specific provision (through honest discussion, for example)

for people to process – collectively and alone – the emotions their work necessarily brings up (p.9).

Emotions are 'integral to and foundational for *all* teaching and learning' (Hargreaves 1999:4). The cost of ignoring teacher emotions is high. The optimising of educational performance and the retention of skilled personnel, requires effective stress management involving action in dealing with the experience of stress through implementing primary, secondary and tertiary preventative approaches (Earnshaw and Cooper, 1996). The success of any organisation depends on a systems approach, on the creation of enabling cultures, an emphasis on relationships between the individual, the organisation, and national and global economies, and improvement in the affective health of employees. Responsibility for improving the bottom line lies with employers not employees. As Hunnicut and Macmillan (1983) assert, the wise beat burnout by examining the barrel itself as well as the apples it contains.

APPENDIX 1. OPENING THE CAN OF WORMS: GENDER AND EMOTION IN SENSITIVE RESEARCH

[the] ethnographic method exposes subjects to far greater danger and exploitation than do more positivist, abstract, and 'masculinist' research methods ... the greater the intimacy ... the greater the danger. (Stacey, 1991: 114)

Researching sensitive issues with vulnerable populations invites 'the disclosure of highly personal and confidential information' (Brannen, 1988: 552). Sensitive research 'potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it' and may present problems 'because research into them involves potential costs to those involved in the research, including, on occasion, the researcher' (Lee, 1993: 4). Highly charged with emotion, the interview may be an intensely stressful experience for both interviewee and interviewer. Emotional pain is shared. Emotion taboos may be shattered.

To reach deeply into another's inner world holds great responsibilities, not only regarding accountability and protection toward the participant self but also the field worker self. In order to protect the self, emotion may be held defensively beneath the surface in the subconscious. That subconscious is the 'can', holding our 'shadow selves' (Abrams and Zweig, 1991). Exploring sensitive issues may incur opening that can, causing the resurfacing of uncomfortable, distressing feelings - the 'worms'.

Opening the 'can of worms' is potentially dangerous. While the interview may provide 'a platform for people to speak their minds in a way, and in such detail that rarely occurs to the ordinary person', it may also prove to be 'a cataclysmic "critical" event

for the interviewee, bringing about a redefinition of personal identity and aims' (Woods 1986: 69-70). It may prove so for the interviewer (Ely et al, 1991). Those in the dialogue may well be unprepared for the emotional and cognitive distress which may have to be dealt with both within and outside the interview experience. Reliving past emotion may precipitate emotional crisis with a subsequent need for immediate therapeutic intervention (Cowles, 1988).

Until recently, emotion has been relatively neglected both as research topic, and as producer of, and product of, interview transactions. However, emotion plays a 'central role in the human experience and cultural scripts of health, sickness, disability and death' (Williams and Bendelow, 1996: 47). To explore beyond common-sense accounts of emotional experience, to bring forth 'real' emotion versus 'script' emotion, requires that fieldworkers possess considerable emotional literacy (Goleman, 1995). To keep both interviewer and interviewee safe requires a heightened awareness and understanding of emotion within the interview transaction and within personal worlds. Fieldworkers require a particular mix of 'skills' - the ability to listen to, identify, interpret and analyse differing emotional voices; to manage feeling rules and uncover dissonance; to share power and intimacy, to demonstrate vulnerability, to self-disclose. What voices do fieldworkers need to explore sensitive issues? What voices do they need to protect both those they interview, and themselves?

In today's complex world, we have potential access to a multiplicity of voices (Gagnon, 1992). Much has been written of the influence of the gendered voice (Warren, 1988). Warren concluded that 'the focal gender myth of field research is the greater communicative skills and less threatening nature of the female fieldworker' (ibid: 64). However, other readings suggest that there may be gendered differences in emotional,

empathic, and communicative skills. For James (1989) the gendered division of labour in both private and public spheres encourages women and men to develop differing emotional skills. There are claims that, in much of the Western world, restrictive emotionality results in many males a) finding understanding, dealing with, and expressing emotion difficult, b) revealing thoughts more than feelings, c) making fewer self-revelations to other males, and d) disclosing more to females (Kilmartin, 1994). It would appear the women and men may communicate in different ways (Tannen, 1991).

What meaning does this hold for the sex/gender of the fieldworker? Was I able to succeed in this type of research solely because I am a woman? Reflections on the research process showed that while the gendered voice was important, I had access to many other voices. It was not the gendered voice per se which held most influence, but access to a wide voice repertoire, a voice repertoire which is accessible not only to some women but also to some men. Through the 'Worm Soufflé' and the voices of my interviewees - through Luke, Stephen, Andrew, Charlotte, Maureen, Rebecca, Harry, Marcus and Ralph - I explore gender and emotion in field relations.

The Worm Soufflé

Never open the can of worms unless you are prepared to make a worm soufflé. (Geraldine Bown, 1998)

I was prepared to open that can, to make that soufflé, where raw, indigestible 'worms' might be explored, and, if necessary, dealt with.

Fieldwork

For a PhD study I am researching the sensitive topic: 'Emotion and stress-related illness and burnout among secondary school teachers'. Stress-related illness results when constellations of chronic negative stressors, unrelieved by positive stressors, accumulate from the interaction of individual factors, work pressures, family pressures and environmental demands (Pearlin, 1989; Woods, 1995). Burnout (Schaufeli et al, 1993) has been described as 'a terrible ordeal' and 'a tragedy, accompanied by intense personal pain' (Graham 1995: 1). My aim was to explore 'human lived experience' (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992: 1). Through individual testimony of illness trajectories (Strauss, 1987) I aimed to provide detailed qualitative and sociological input into the area of stress, burnout, and teacher emotion. According to Woods (1985: 17) life histories 'tune into the process and flux of life, with all its uncertainties, vicissitudes, inconsistencies and ambiguities, but on a deeper scale, for they reach the subjective realities, pull in the historic and contextualise the present within the total framework of individual lives'.

I interviewed ten women and eleven men, between one and nine times over nineteen months, averaging four sessions each. Eight were teaching, nine in alternative employment, four on extended sick leave. Twelve spouses [8 female, 4 male] agreed to tell their stories. Three teenaged children volunteered their experiences of the parent's stress career. Interviews took place mainly in the home, generally lasting two to three hours, with around one and a half hours being taped and later fully transcribed, analytical summaries being returned to interviewees for validation and additional comment.

I talked with those in the first stages of crisis, those in the throes of breakdown, and those striving to rebuild their lives. I perused photograph albums, delved into secluded corners, listened to intimacies and secrets, and, on occasion, swapped confidences. In some cases I observed despair as personal and professional worlds disintegrated. With some others I witnessed the delights of self-regeneration, of identity reconstruction. I was asking these teachers to delve beneath the public face at a very painful stage in life, when many felt at their most vulnerable. There were many tearful occasions. Both males and females cried openly. I was deeply moved by many narratives, and was ready to make that visible to participants. I did not hide my feelings. Occasionally I too was close to tears. How did I deal with this?

I felt it morally necessary to have access to a safety net. I adopted a humanistic interviewing framework derived from person-centred counselling (Rogers, 1951; Mearns and Thorne, 1988; Paterson, 1997). I understood this as encouraging a facilitative relationship, most likely providing protection for both conversational partners, the emphasis on mutual benefit, offsetting fears of exploitation (Cannon, 1989). I aimed to create a safe 'good-enough' holding environment (Stapley, 1996), characterised by genuineness, empathic understanding, and unconditional positive regard, where participants might both explore their personal worlds and contribute to some research they felt to be of potential value to their profession, where the interviewing role was both a 'data-collecting instrument for the project and a data-collecting instrument for those whose lives were being researched' (Oakley, 1981: 49). We cannot ask unless we are prepared to give (Lather, 1986).

What was it I felt I might offer that perhaps others could not? I felt I had life experiences which would provide access to voices which would enable me to deal with

the emotions which might surface in sensitive interviews. The experiences of fieldwork showed how exploring emotional worlds requires a complex knowledge and understanding of one's own and others' emotions plus skills in monitoring, appraisal and management (James and Gabe, 1996).

Soufflé Preparation: Acquiring the Qualities of the Soufflé Chef

While we all have the potential to develop many voices, experiences may nurture or impair their expression and realisation (Francis, 1997). Reflections on my own life history give a brief insight into some of the voices befitting the task of soufflé chef. Voices developed through a wide range of personal experiences within

- the familial sphere - mothering two boys, rebellious farming wife, caring for sandwich agricultural students, miscarriage, bereavement, near death experiences, and marital breakdown;
- the public sphere - various organisational cultures within teaching, the Citizen's Advice Bureau as volunteer and trainer, sixth form psychology and GNVQ teaching, research associate introducing and facilitating quality improvement with primary health care teams (Hearnshaw et al, 1998), training in multi-disciplinary counselling, piano teaching, choral conducting and singing, amateur dramatics.

Being the soufflé chef was not easy. I do not view the process as a maturing of innate traits but rather as a struggle of negotiating gendered identities, which I explore through the voices of early life, marriage and academic life.

‘One is not born a woman: one becomes a woman ‘ (de Beauvoir, 1949: 295)

One also becomes a man (Mac an Ghaill, 1994). I was a tomboy, raised in a Scottish mining community. Like many of my peers, childhood and adolescence was a time of identity struggle as I came to terms with societal expectations of what it meant to be female and male (Sharpe, 1976; Stanley, 1993). I internalised the feeling ‘rules’ of my community - ‘the socially shared guidelines, governing the extent, type and intensity of feeling’ (Bulan et al, 1997: 237) - and the sanctions applied against non-conformity such as invisibility, intimidation, sexual harassment (Stanworth, 1983). I learned Kipling’s Six Serving Men - the What, Why, When, How, Where and Who of holding and expressing emotion such as fear, anger, joy. According to Rogers et al, during adolescence, girls experience a loss in ego development as they actively struggle with the ‘debilitating conventions of female behaviour’ (1994: 30). Through assessing the emotional climate within the family and the classroom, I avoided negative feelings through emotion management of the self. Masculine gender orientations were discouraged, feminine gender orientations encouraged. Certain voices such as the maternal, the empathic, came to the forefront (Karniol et al, 1998). Some other available voices, the intellectual, the instrumental, became silent, frozen in time. By the age of 18, like many of my peers, I had capitulated, giving up all ambitions of a career in the philanthropic sciences, opting for mate hunting and the safety of music teaching.

I also struggled with the voice of disability. A polio survivor, currently dealing with the Late Effects of Polio, I know what marginalisation means for me, what it is to be the outsider. In childhood I experienced ostracization by unenlightened peers in primary

school. As a disabled working class female teenager in grammar school, I felt alien. As a mature woman, I continue to experience 'otherness' (Gornick, 1971). Stress-related illness often incurs marginality. The disabled voice and the feminine voice have given preparation for the task of exploring the emotions of marginality.

Feminist voices

Marriage entailed becoming a full-time farming wife as my husband began a career in farms management on a large traditional estate. Rural life was alien to me. It was through the experiences of the rural economy that I developed a greater awareness and understanding of

- the emotion management dichotomy - emotion prescribed and regulated by others on the one hand, and autonomous, regulated by the self, on the other (Tolich, 1993);
- emotive dissonance - conflicts between what we feel, what we think we should feel, what we want to feel and what we try to feel (Hochschild, 1983)

Farming dominated family life. I found the working and social milieu controlling and disempowering, any needs I might have completely subsumed beneath the needs of the estate. I began to lose any sense of autonomy. I could not 'tug the forelock'. I could not accept management giving me orders via my husband, providing me no access to negotiation, or indeed refusal. Friends and family ('townies'!) enthused about the joys of country life, assuming I must find it idyllic, while I felt isolated and unhappy, without a supportive social network. I tried hard to play the farming wife but did not succeed. Resentment, frustration, powerlessness and anger simmered within.

I turned to raising two male children - a fascinating journey for any embryonic feminist. I watched their choice of voices narrow in response to their social world. It was near impossible to employ non-sexist childrearing methods (Statham, 1986). I was often told I was inviting future problems by making them different. Hochschild (1997: 210) proposes that one of the main skills which develops within the family is 'the ability to forge, deepen and repair family relationships' which entails 'noticing, acknowledging and empathizing with the feelings of family members, patching up quarrels, and soothing relationships'. It is more likely that mothers have the opportunities and time to develop such skills. According to Eichenbaum and Orbach (1983) women tend to become responsible for emotional labouring as they constantly make compromises between their own needs and those of others. I learned to cope with children's fears, their distress and their tears, trying to ease their way in the world. I provided nurturance, comfort and protection. This I experienced as empowering. However, harnessing such skills can also be strategic. Through monitoring, assessing and shifting the focus of family encounters, I achieved instrumental ends such as creating harmony or conflict (O'Brien 1994). Through the use of rewards and sanctions, I learned to use emotion as a means of ordering people, as a mechanism of social control (Miller, 1991). The perceived inequities of farming life led to the development of feminist voices. This was a voice of injustice and anger. 'Taming' these feminist voices led to the return of intellectual and instrumental voices.

Academic voices

Through the WEA and the Open University, I acquired an academic background in women's studies, psychology and sociology. Politically and academically, feminism became central to my life. I learned to hide this voice from unsympathetic peers. I

studied counselling, family therapy, marital therapy and transactional analysis. The emotions which resurfaced here, the aftermath of childhood polio, were difficult to handle, necessitating my receiving counselling. Gaining funding for a full-time Masters in Interdisciplinary Women's Studies at Warwick, my focus became women's mental health, interviewing 'survivors' of invasive psychiatry, in particular electro-convulsive therapy. With little awareness, understanding and experience of feminist interviewing, the 'can of worms' or the 'worm soufflé', I was allowed to naively enter the lives of six women for a single interview. Meeting one woman many months later, I discovered I had unwittingly opened her can, my questions resulting in a traumatic reassessment of work and family life. PhD study has given a greater grasp of the perils of qualitative interviewing and the protections required for all parties. It is only now that I feel I have amassed the necessary skills to accomplish this type of interviewing. The feminist voice, in combination with instrumental, expressive, counselling and gendered voices, now has an emotional and cognitive balance appropriate to the task of soufflé chef.

Soufflé Baking: Enabling Disclosure

The influence of the gendered voice

In what ways did being female influence disclosure? Arendell (1997: 348) writes 'I came to understand that it was not me so much as a person having a particular interactional and interview style to whom they were sharing their stories. Rather, they were relating to me on the basis of their expectations of me as a woman'. Being positioned as a woman (Davies and Harré, 1990) and having access to the feminine voice gave advantages in conducting this research.

For some women it was important to be interviewed by another woman. Rebecca was the victim of a sexual assault by a pupil, which brought a resurgence of emotional trauma from childhood. She described conversations with her female psychiatrist: 'it was easy to talk to her because she was a woman ... it's easier to talk to women about it even though the men have been wonderful. They really understand more what it means than men, however supportive they feel.' From observations of marriage, family life and working environments, Rebecca believes that 'women know their emotions ... women tend to chat more and men tend to bottle it up more'. Her description of a new partner gives insight into her perceptions of gendered conversational styles - 'the first thing that struck me about him was that he listens very carefully to what you say, he talks effortlessly, which is so rare, not in all men, but it's so hard to find isn't it, somebody who talks in depth and listens and thinks and takes it in'.

Ralph explained his need for a female confidante, 'I still don't think (sighs) you know that there is enough of a situation whereby male staff are able to talk to males. It's still perceived as a sign of weakness ... I tend to go and talk to one of my female colleagues ... partly because the two colleagues I would talk to are still so bound up on the treadmill that they don't really have time for that sort of conversation. They're too busy running still from meeting to meeting. Unable to stay and chat'. He talked of a male colleague with marital troubles, 'that sort of thing's so personal you won't talk about it ... men have to bottle it all up until it explodes'.

Interviewees' beliefs about gender and emotion, and of women as listeners were important to disclosure. Cultural display rules may dictate what emotional expression is acceptable (Levant, 1995). Six male interviewees described how their feminine side was lost in childhood. According to Kilmartin (1994: 13) traditional masculine

socialisation damages some men by rendering them 'less capable of having empathic, caring, intimate relationships with other people'. By the time some men seek help they may be experiencing a profound level of psychological pain. Moynihan suggests that while suffering life-threatening illness, a man may recoil 'in stoical silence, desperately eager to keep hold of the masculine identity that he's been taught is symbolic of strength and success as a man' (Moynihan, 1998a: 13; Moynihan, 1998b). Illness disempowers. The stress experience can also be an emasculating experience for men as feelings of loss of control are magnified through the expression of painful emotion, seen as incompatible with some masculinities (Doyle, 1989).

Before reaching crisis point, all the women, but only one man, in the sample discussed feelings with family, friends and colleagues. Within interviews men talked of emotions they were unable to disclose to others. Stephen became very upset and tearful as he told his experience. He had been unable to speak with colleagues or family about his distress - 'the more things started to go wrong, the less I'm prepared to talk about it, the feelings of failure. I don't want to expose the failing too much ... everything just seemed to add to this sense of failure'.

Andrew described this new experience: 'You're making me look introspectively. I really haven't thought about myself, how I feel, so trying to describe to someone else how I feel is very difficult'. He felt 'stress maybe was for wimps ... it's not masculine to have emotions, feelings and things'. Fighting his tears, he saw himself as struggling against emerging emotion rather than using it, 'because I'd rather that I didn't have those feelings ... we're all conditioned by the society we're in. I don't think society thinks that it's a masculine, grown-up thing to do. If I was a little boy, I could cry then but, you know, men don't ... a man can show anger, a woman can burst into tears - it's

maybe the same emotion that they're both displaying in different ways'. Feelings of shame, failure and fear reinforced one another.

The expectation of women as providers of emotional labour was important in enabling some interviewees to disclose. Confidentiality and trust enabled both women and men to discuss problems with impotence and loss of libido, menopause and sexuality. Four men revealed they had never before spoken of these issues to anyone. Three asked for advice in helping their relationship recover. While there may have been areas where being male would have facilitated the collection of alternative data, I believe access to the feminine voice was instrumental in facilitating some areas of disclosure.

The influence of other voices

The gendered voice was not the only important voice. Both academic and teacher voices were significant. Interviewees felt it important that the academic and political world take their plight seriously. They wanted to change concepts of 'failing teachers' and sought an opportunity of reaching policy makers. Andrew saw the experience as 'an indirect way of helping others'. Luke viewed it as a chance to 'try and make sure that other people in my position can get support. I've been through it and that's why it's important, if there's anything I can do to help other people in that position, not personally, but a method to set things up'. Interviewees felt the teacher voice aided understanding. As Rebecca stated, 'you understand it - the background and the pressures, and the rowdyism, the sense of responsibility you feel for the children, and the things that come up in schools, that it's become more and more like a battle ground.'

The role of the counselling voice was substantial. The person-centred interview actively may encourage self-reflection in deeper ways than some other techniques. Interviews were not generally characterised by equality in power, fourteen participants being ill, nine receiving prescribed medication. As the 'healthy' individual I held considerable power over those more vulnerable. It would have been relatively easy to manipulate and to exploit, to persuade the more insecure interviewees into disclosing more information than they felt comfort in giving. Luke revealed, 'after you'd gone I thought I can't believe that I've just spilt my guts out to someone that I don't know'. While this caused some feelings of vulnerability, on reflection he trusted my promise of confidentiality, that control regarding the use of his data lay with him. The degree of intimacy surprised interviewees. When I checked out Charlotte's feelings about proceeding, she revealed 'I'm a bit embarrassed, I suppose ... this is very revealing isn't it, warts and all'.

It would also have been easy to accept surface emotion and move onto other areas. 'Staying with the feelings' is a counselling strategy which encourages emotion expression, providing a deeper understanding of individual emotion through getting beyond the public face (Mackay et al, 1998). One of the primary emotions which re-emerged was anger. Luke's interview illustrates the need to distinguish between script and real emotion. He initially stated that he felt no anger, no need to express anger.

'I don't get angry. I never get angry. I'm a very placid sort of person'. There was a short pause. I raised one eyebrow while he reflected. 'You're triggering things off in my mind because now I can say yes I could have felt angry at different times with my parents' - pause - 'because their relationship was an important part of my life and I did get angry at times with them.'. He talked

of anger in childhood and the need he felt then to distance himself from this negative emotion, explaining 'Oh yes, I didn't want to argue, I didn't want to shout, I didn't want to be like them.' - pause - 'Yes, I didn't want to be like them and in the end by not being abusive, by not giving the release, it's driven under. I don't feel the need to be angry'. pause - 'Everybody does from time to time'. He then explained his anger at school decisions where he'd 'been mistreated, lied to It was finding out parts of my nature I hadn't recognised before, and I did have some major angry times which took me by surprise'. He realised he was 'running on adrenaline', displacing the negative emotion he felt onto performing with a band at nights. 'It was just a cacophony ... quite popular at the time but it was just a big noise. A big angry noise'.

During this interview we had been interrupted several times by the cat wanting to come in and out. We were interrupted by yet again. 'That bloody cat! I'm going to get angry with it in a minute!' We laughed as he realised what he had said. Through the reflection process he recognised anger as one facet of his multiple self.

I was viewed as their 'unofficial' therapist by some. Ralph felt the research experience had been helpful, acting as 'a form of therapy. It has allowed me to think through problems out loud and hopefully I've done the right thing for myself and my family'. Alex saw it 'as a form of counselling. You clearly haven't counselled me, you've enabled me to do what a counsellor would normally do, which is talk'. As he told his story, he ensured my silence through body language. Each time I tried to enter the conversation, asking for further information or clarification, he held up an outstretched hand, palm towards me. This I initially interpreted as a gendered message of dominance. I felt a sense of powerlessness which was absent with both the women and

with those men who appeared more comfortable with their 'feminine' selves. On reflection it may be that Alex required control over the process for his own self-protection. As his 'counsellor', my place in this interview was to listen.

Several voices thus contributed to the voice repertoire enabling disclosure. It was the counselling voice, however, which provided the safe environment.

Soufflé Bubbles: Managing Re-emergent Emotion

The sensitive interview can unleash feelings of distress in both interviewee and interviewer. Teachers talked of work abuse within organisational cultures of fear, of violence and sexual harassment from pupils, of relationship breakdowns and value discord. Maureen described the stress within her school as 'a virus which feeds on itself. One person is unhappy, another person is unhappy. It spreads round within the community. People don't recognise how stressed they are becoming'.

Teachers and family members described how health deteriorated as stress-related illness and burnout took hold. As crisis approached, they recounted problems with diabetes balance, asthma, blood pressure, depression, sleep loss, nightmares, migraine, memory loss, chronically upset stomach, teeth grinding leading to jaw dislocation, uncontrollable crying, increasing self-medication, drug and alcohol abuse. Maureen declared 'I was screaming inside. I wasn't me, the personality just gets wiped out, the person you think of as you'.

They reported feeling unvalued and devalued, out of control and worthless, bringing home feelings of emotional pain, of impotency, frustration, fear, resentment, anger,

anxiety, despair, guilt, shame, failure. There were perceptions of multiple losses, in confidence, trust, and self-esteem, of power, status, identity, autonomy and respect. As perceptions of competency and control within life worlds decreased, there was a concentration on negative emotion and a loss of positive emotion. Huge emotional struggles took place within family systems, as families lost care providers, and as feelings of shock, bewilderment, anger, fear, frustration and helplessness took hold. Interviewees had all undergone severe emotional distress, several remaining traumatised by their experiences. It was vital to protect interviewees from harm and to have resources to deal with any problems that might have arisen.

Keeping safe: the interviewee self

I needed safeguards both within and outside interviews. Fourteen interviewees were already in touch with counselling services/psychiatrists, had access to a general practitioner or skilled family members/friends. For others, I made contact with a counselling service. Having discussed 'opening the can' with all participants on the telephone before arranging interviews, eight had prepared themselves for possible distress, with close friends or relatives standing by. There may be a need for professional intervention between sessions. All had my telephone number and were advised to call if they needed to talk. For one of the participants who experienced a false renewal and further distress, I suggested professional intervention might prove helpful. This was refused.

To maintain a safe holding environment within interviews, I monitored both participants' emotion state and my own. Through counselling supervision from a qualified counsellor, I learned to use a) transference, where the interviewee projects

feelings towards significant others onto the interviewer, and b) countertransference, where feelings are aroused in the interviewer which provide clues to the interviewees emotion state (Holloway, 1995; Houston, 1996; Hawkins and Shohet, 1996). While much counter-transference is unconscious, my counsellor taught me that as I became aware of feelings within the interview, I needed to ask myself two questions - Did I bring these with me? Are they new? If I recognised their origin as within me, they had no place in the interview. If I knew I did not bring them, then they needed to be noted and explored for meaning. Through such emotional labour, I became more skilful in using the counselling voice in recognising, assessing, monitoring and managing emotion within interviews.

Young and Lee (1996) argue that 'the emotion work that is done in research is best seen as an attempt to manage feeling rules' where 'dissonance is not only inevitable but offers potentially valuable insights into the competing tensions of involvement, comfort, and identification' (in James and Gabe, 1996: 16).

Emergent thoughts provoked dissonance. As potentially disabling feelings bubbled to the surface, I gave continual reassurance, supporting as new and old thoughts and feelings emerged. Marcus talked of feelings of guilt towards colleagues providing cover while he was absent. I reflected back his words, asking whether he had similar feelings of guilt towards pupils. He replied, 'I didn't feel guilty because the pupils were missing out if that's what you mean. No, I never did actually, perhaps I should have done!' He laughed and declared 'Now look what you've done! No, no I didn't!' We both laughed. I gave him time to think. He realised he felt differently to some colleagues, 'I was angry probably with the pupils ... it was the pupils who got me into that situation. In the end I just said, sod it! I don't care any more. I got to that stage, which is very

unlike me, not to care. So it changed my outlook. I just turned off'. Laughter dissipated the tension of dissonance. Time to reflect achieved consonance.

'Feeling rules' were not only managed, they were transgressed. Luke has many unpleasant memories which he found difficult to express. He was very tearful throughout his first interview. During tearful episodes, I gently supported him until he felt composed. Counselling training has equipped me to feel comfortable with tears and with silence, giving time for self-reflexivity, enabling interviewees to gather thoughts and find emotional expression. A symbiotic relationship developed. As Luke's voice lowered when talking of the situations which led up to breakdown, the bizarre behaviours, hallucinations and fears, my voice lowered to match. He was given psychotropic drug therapy,

'I was awake but completely comatose, then my body started to come back, but it was uncontrollable I could move about but it also moved itself. It was like having Tourettes. I was very scared' There was a long pause. When he signalled readiness to continue through re-establishing eye contact, I repeated the last phrase back to him. He continued his story with many long pauses and tears. Apologising, he explained his motivation to continue, 'Sorry. It's quite difficult emotionally ... I don't like feeling out of control, that's really what I was - out of control or no control, running around doing crazy things. I feel a bit better now. This is a bit of a monologue. I'm OK I want to make sure that other people in my position can get support. I've been through it. That's why I think it is important that I do this to help other people ... that was quite painful. I don't go back that often. I do at times, and I

think it's necessary. It comes back to being part of this process of being better that you can recognise the symptoms that take you back to what started it off.

Negative emotions, past and present, were worked through, explored only when participants felt ready to do so. Through acknowledging and reflecting feelings, the feeling rules within the interview experience were signalled. The expression of painful emotion, such as anger, sadness, grief, despair, often discounted as irrational and forbidden, was deemed appropriate and 'normalised'. It was OK to cry. It was OK to show anger.

Some emotion, however, may be best left to experts. Rebecca explained her 'feeling rules' for keeping herself safe, saying, 'I couldn't cry for years. I was afraid if I cried or let any emotions out, I suppose I had so much to cover, that it would come out like an explosion and I wouldn't be able to get the lid on and I wouldn't be able to function. So I was petrified'. A disturbing assault by a pupil resulted in post traumatic stress disorder and emotion from a childhood experience resurfacing. She explained 'I've been totally out of control for over a year I couldn't recognise myself ... I had a series of six sessions with [counsellor], to talk it through, talk about what it had triggered in me, strange thoughts and feelings'

Interpreting her body language and my feelings as indicating unreadiness, I did not pursue this and changed direction. In a later session she brought up this incident again. She had recently arranged sessions with a psychotherapist

D: you said that this incident brought up all sorts of feelings and anxieties?

R: a similar situation in childhood – I'll perhaps talk about them later.

Rebecca never did explore these emotions with me. I could have probed further but did not. I had no right to ask her to open her can against her will. She knew what might be below the surface and did not feel ready to disclose them here. Rebecca's own capacity for self-determination ensured her 'can' remained closed and in the hands of her chosen expert. I asked myself how often, within longitudinal interviews, did I have the right to ask interviewees to open their can.

Feedback was one area where the resurfacing of emotion re-opened the can. I offered to provide brief summaries of interviews. This created an added stressor for some. Maureen, a participant in the pilot study, found reading her narrative summary a painful experience, both disturbing and illuminating. After interview 5, she read her summary alone. By the time she finished she was crying. She initially felt anger against me. Seeing her 'special places', locations which held special spiritual meaning for her, in black and white was distressing. She did not want others to read about them. Some terminology - e.g. the 'hello/good-bye' effect - she did not understand. Her husband was very upset at the initial effect this had on her, interpreting her response as rekindling distress. While initially disturbing, it made her think very hard about her feelings. She had recently heard of several colleagues now absent diagnosed as suffering stress-related illness. She realised just how angry she felt. She had adopted an individual stress discourse, directing anger at herself for being a 'non-coper'. She now adopted an organisational stress discourse, directing her feelings towards an abusive system. Insensitive handling of feedback could have lost a valuable conversational partner. I was able to reassure her. Discussion before interview 6 indicated Maureen viewed emotional pain as necessary to self-renewal. She interpreted her distress as helping effect closure on the past and maintained her motivation to continue with the study.

Maureen's experience taught a valuable lesson. I had underestimated the impact of the narrative summary - both verbal and written. I had agreed to bring Luke the first interview summary. Before turning on the tape, over a cup of tea, we discussed his thoughts during the intervening month, then read through the summary together. We worked through some of the emotion which surfaced. He was close to tears. When he felt he could talk on tape the conversation began:

D How did you feel reading that?

L. It's quite painful.

D Quite painful?

L I've not been through the whole process myself and written it all down. As I was reading, I was visualising events that we discussed. I think when I visualise the event I get the same emotions through my head as at that time. They're still there now and I think that's why it's painful. I think some of the things are quite shocking particularly the bit where my life is running really out of control. The part about the drinking. Some of this behaviour was quite self-destructive, but I can see that now, as I'm reading that, that I'm quite a different person in lots of ways, and not in some ways, that it can still be part of me, still part of my makeup, but I've very much moved on in my experiences.

Beginnings and endings of interviews need careful management. Before ending interviews I spent time making sure interviewees were feeling comfortable, bringing

them back to the 'real' world, often over coffee, taking the conversation into other areas of life. Luke shared his feelings with me over a cup of tea. He had found it very difficult to talk about emotion. Before self-renewal, emotion had indicated negativity. He felt he had no vocabulary for feelings in words, more in sound, colour, images. 'I've got no words to describe it so I draw music around it'. He played me some of the music he was working on. His very intense tone poems of emotion touched me deeply. Here, I too felt total inadequacy in verbal expression. We parted friends. I was invited back during the summer to visit him and his partner. I wrote in my diary '[His music] reminded me of Fred Hoyle's novel 'The Black Hole', reaching deep into the soul, going on this journey and emerging as part of the expansive oneness with the universe, a feeling of freedom, of being at one, a merging of wisdom, like dissolving but not into non-existence - into pure existence'. Perhaps his metaphor for self-renewal? To be able to provide a secure environment for interviewees meant I needed to feel secure myself. I found I also needed a safety net.

Keeping safe: the fieldworker self

I had to manage my own emotion. 'You must be soaking up all their emotion. How do you cope with it?' declared an ex-colleague. Recognising and managing my own emotion state involved noting my feelings but remaining silent, which I found difficult at times! There were remarks made about women, especially where relationships had ended, which I found uncomfortable. I felt anger at the way some treated women in their lives, their feelings about the feminisation of their profession, towards women in positions of power, the language used and way I sometimes seemed invisible as a woman. At times I found listening to this offensive and distressing. I experienced a loss of power. There was conflict between what I felt I 'ought' to be feeling (unconditional

positive regard, empathy etc), what I was feeling, what I wanted to feel, and what I tried to feel, emotive dissonance giving clues to my feeling rules. A colleague engaged on similar research with primary school teachers avoided getting into intense emotional situations. He found that during tearful episodes he experienced 'acute embarrassment' (Troman, 1998). While I am used to tears and outbursts, both my own and those of children, husband, friends, pupils, colleagues, I felt acutely uncomfortable with the expression of emotion on two occasions.

According to Deborah Lamb, 'all research is me-research' in that it may entail confronting one's own 'ghosts' (Ely et al, 1991: 124). One of the most useful therapy techniques has been the 'muck-cart'. I was once told to accept all the projected feelings thrown at me in a counselling encounter, to store them temporarily on my shoulders, but as I left to return home, to heave them on that muck-cart and leave them behind. After these interviews I was able to walk away from participants and metaphorically throw those feelings into that cart. I stopped in a lay-by to make field notes. By the time I was home, negative emotion had usually been worked through. I was successful in all but two interviews, one of which completely overwhelmed me as it touched my own submerged emotional past. Analytical distancing became temporarily impossible as my own can opened.

This possibility had been anticipated within the research design. I was funded for six sessions with a counsellor of my choice. My colleague Geoff was not given the same provision. He now wonders if this might have been useful for him since it was 'hard to listen to bad news all day' (Troman, 1999, personal communication). In many professions, such supervision is the norm on a much more regular basis. Six sessions were not enough, not covering the full span of interviews. Unfortunately, counselling

provision had ceased when my own can opened. Luckily I had family and friends who supported me. The resources of a counsellor experienced in work counselling supervision proved invaluable (Carroll, 1996). The sessions provided 'coping' tools: butterflies on my fridge and computer to remind me of how she carefully brought me out of my crysalis, a 'parrot' on my shoulder which repeatedly told me I was OK. They contributed to the research through allowing me to explore interview resistances (my reluctance and interviewee reluctance to pursue certain areas), transference and countertransference issues and paralleling (where processes at work within the interviewee/interviewer relationship are mirrored in the interviewer/counsellor relationship). They aided my own personal growth. Through the experiencing of vicarious emotion, I gained greater understanding of the difference between the emotional empathic voice - the experiencing of other's emotion, and the intellectual empathic voice - taking the perspective of the other (Duan and Hill, 1996). This enhanced the empathic voice. The research experience became a positive one for both interviewees and interviewer.

The Risen Soufflé: Therapeutic Outcomes

In therapeutic work, it is expected that there are therapeutic outcomes. In sensitive research, there may also be therapeutic outcomes. For some interviewees, there were profound changes in understanding their emotions.

Charlotte and I did much exploration of both negative and positive emotion within her last few years in teaching. A new understanding of values emerged. 'It's very important. I wanted to carry on, give myself a quality life, one that I was proud of, because the more it was going down the pan, the more I felt I was going back into using

drugs again. But I didn't realise until now, until talking to you, I didn't realise. Isn't that strange?"

I wrote in my diary, 'I often feel I am exploiting them'. This was dismissed by participants. Checking this out, I found no one admitted to feeling exploited. When I asked Charlotte she said no and explained how beneficial it had been for her.

Until talking to you I didn't realise. It's really a nice feeling, to feel that I'm not on my own. I think something like stress, you shelve it under the carpet but to be able to actually pick it up and look at it for what it is, it's an enrichment in life really. It's been good, made it three-dimensional for me. Exploring it has made it tangible and by making it tangible, you can pick it up and plonk it away. It's actually made me look around it, at the nooks and crannies of it, walk around it, and it's not such a horrible thing as it was. It's not very big at all- a wrinkle in life! You've given it a label so you can see it as a symbolic thing, it's like this magic thing, you've named it and so you can now get rid of it, exorcise it because you've named it and given the devil its name, Beelzebub and the devil is out!

This experience was cathartic for Charlotte. It enabled her to objectify the stress experience and the self, and helped her come to terms with some losses. Marcus revealed,

To begin it with, I think it made me think about the situation and analyse it a little bit more, and then the last couple of sessions, it's been rather strange in that I feel divorced now from the person who was stressed out 3 months, or

however long it was ago, I feel that person doesn't exist any more, because it's all gone, it's all in the past now, it's something which is almost not me if you like, it's a part of my life which I've shelved now and I've gone on from it.

The interviews were instrumental in his being able to accept closure of this period of his past. I asked Rebecca, '... one of the fears I had was in opening up the 'can of worms'. I wondered how you felt about this?' She replied:

At first I was very fragile wasn't I? I haven't spoken in such depth about it. I feel it's been really interesting. It's made me look very closely at what happened and I think the fact that we've given each other this month apart and isolated the stages has been immensely interesting you know like unresolved and resolved, and I think some of the comments that you've made and some of the bits you've taken out of it and shown to me back are really interesting, to clarify it and I've found it very beneficial, I have, extremely, extremely.

There was a great deal of pain to work through but it was seen as essential to the healing process. As Rebecca explained

I think when I started looking inwards at some of my own problems, I found that difficult, but not negative, it had got to be done, got to be done. I found that hard. I'm the sort of person if there's something there I'd rather do it, I'd rather take it out and look at it and deal with it ... A couple of times early on I remember I felt tearful but I think it was a healthy tearful because it was dealing properly with something.

Some months later we had a cup of tea and a chat in her new workplace. I knew she was fine.

Ralph found that interviews aided earlier recognition of an illness resurgence after false renewal, 'it's been helpful - I don't think it's made me think about anything I haven't *wanted* to think about ... I suppose that's the success of the conversations I've had with you and [his female counsellor], made me put *me* at the centre of things.' Changes in feeling and thought throughout narratives were apparent. As far as I am aware, the benefits outweighed any losses.

In later interviews, I sought insight into how interviews had affected participants, allowing me to gauge readiness to stop contact. Alex declared 'It's been a pleasure'. Gareth had very much enjoyed the experience, looking forward to receiving analytical feedback. Participants overwhelmingly found interviews positive experiences, exploration in safety providing new understandings. I interviewed Jonathon's partner Jo. Jonathon felt it helped their relationship, saying 'I think it gave her a better insight into some of the events and things that had gone on between us so perhaps - it should happen to everybody, you know, you shouldn't just counsel the one part of the family, you should counsel both parts of the family.'

Luke felt his interviews aided his relationship with his partner, 'I felt a big release having talked to you ... some of those memories that I've discussed with you at a personal level, with my partner whom I've known for X years, I've not even discussed them with her ... last Friday night, lots of that came out and we had a big cleansing between us, lots of things that she got out, it all came out and that's something that I probably wouldn't have done before. I recognise that as a step forward.'

Only one interview was observed by a colleague. As Harry explained how his life had been turned upside down by his partner's experience of stress-related illness, he wept, hiding his face behind his arm, tearing at his hair. One of his main losses was the warmth, the closeness, the bodily contact in his relationship with his partner. At the close of the interview, he came forward and shook my hand. My nurturing voice asked if he would accept a hug. We held each other briefly. He kissed me lightly on the cheek. This is perhaps not a response many male fieldworkers would feel comfortable with. Perhaps had I been alone I might have felt this unsafe. However, I feel I gave Harry something he needed at that time.

I found that I not only gave to interviewees. They also gave to me. Interviewees, particularly females, were attentive of my emotional needs through seeking mutual disclosure and offering support. However, it was Luke who created a safe post interview holding environment for me, encouraging me to open up to him. We had developed an intense rapport. He had picked up some counter-transference from me. While we finished the session with another cup of tea, he asked how I was feeling, sensing I was troubled - perhaps I might feel free to talk with him in the role of 'professional stranger'? I was hesitant. After two and a half hours intense conversation, my 'mask' was down, my non-verbal communication showing he had hit the proverbial nail on the head. He again repeated his offer. I ended up spending half an hour 'spilling my guts'. After this I experienced what I must assume to be similar emotion to his re trust and confidentiality issues. While I had promised confidentiality to him, he was not under the same professional commitment to me. I felt power relations had been reversed. I felt extremely vulnerable but I also felt trust in him. Luke was well in tune with both masculine and feminine gender orientations. I felt in tune with his voice repertoire. This experience with Luke showed that it is not being a woman per se that is

of prime significance in the sensitive interview relationship, but possession of a flexible gender role orientation, feeling comfort with both feminine and masculine aspects of the self, access to particular voices within particular social contexts, the capacity to perform the necessary emotional labouring, and the 'fit' between individuals.

Last Words

When I began this research, I thought I was well-prepared. The original focus was self-renewal after stress-related illness and burnout. However, I had to broaden my skills base as the full impact of the emotion aspects of stress-related illness became clearer. A few years ago I would not have reached a successful outcome. Life has provided an immensely fruitful learning curve, where the skills of intellectual empathy, empathic emotion and empathic listening skills have been sharpened through a variety of encounters which provided valuable opportunities for practice. Through PhD supervision and work counselling supervision, through my own personal growth and through the voices of interviewees, my voice repertoire expanded, enhancing emotional literacy, and enabling listening for many interviewee voices rather than few.

To explore emotion requires a particular mix of 'skills' such as the ability to self-disclose, to demonstrate vulnerability, to share power and intimacy. It requires considerable emotion management skills and emotional literacy. Many women learn these skills within their relationships with others. Not all women develop these emotional skills. Much work on gender claims that men generally are less likely to be possess these skills or to feel comfortable with emotion expression. However, there are many men whose voice repertoires provide them with the necessary emotional skills.

I view the success of this project as due to being positioned both as female and as a counsellor, and to the creation of an appropriate skills base. For some interviewees, especially those men holding rigid gender role orientations, it undoubtedly was important that I was female, that I did not compound any loss of face, that I did not threaten loss of identity further, and that I shared control of the interview process. Of most significance, however, was the combination of voices which produced an outcome which, for the majority of interviewees, was thought provoking, enlightening, self-enhancing and growth promoting, contextualising experience and helping them get on with the rest of their lives.

It is not only when researching vulnerable populations that emotion comes to the forefront. Emotion lies at the heart of much ethnography. Participants have complex lives, complex histories. Organisations have complex emotion environments. Researchers have no crystal ball to see what questioning might provoke. In carrying out interviews field workers may enter personal and organisational worlds, open the 'can of worms', follow the recipe, but not always be around to see what emerges from the oven.

Opening the can may be a tricky business. Appropriate tools may not be available. The 'worms' may go off in unexpected directions. Baking the soufflé may release unforeseen turbulence. The 'can of worms' and the 'worm soufflé' are thus important concepts. Do all fieldworkers engaged in such work possess skills which enable them to explore the 'worms' effectively? What opportunities are available to hone these skills through professional development? In raising consciousnesses, what duty of care does the research community hold towards interviewees and towards field workers? What ethical guidelines are available? What safeguards are provided? What 'can of worms'

might the research community hold? It is time to give gender and emotion a higher priority in the professional development of research students and fieldworkers.

APPENDIX 2. THE EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK.

(Goleman, 1998: 26-27).

Personal Competence

These competencies determine how we manage ourselves

Self-Awareness

Knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions

- **Emotional awareness:** Recognizing one's emotions and their effects
- **Accurate Self-assessment:** Knowing one's strengths and limits
- **Self-confidence:** A strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities

Self-Regulation

managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources

- **Self-Control:** Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check
- **Trustworthiness:** Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
- **Conscientiousness:** Taking responsibility for personal performance
- **Adaptability:** Flexibility in handling change
- **Innovation:** Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information

Motivation

Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate goals

- **Achievement drive:** Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence
- **Commitment:** Aligning with the goals of the group or organization
- **Initiative:** Readiness to act on opportunities
- **Optimism:** Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

Social Competence

These competencies determine how we handle relationships

Empathy

Awareness of other's feelings, needs, and concerns

- **Understanding others:** Sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns
- **Developing others:** Sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities
- **Service orientation:** Anticipating, recognizing, and meeting customers' needs
- **Leveraging diversity:** Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people
- **Political awareness:** reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships

Social Skills

Adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others

- **Influence:** Wielding effective tactics for persuasion
- **Communication:** Listening openly and sending convincing messages
- **Conflict management:** Negotiating and resolving disagreements
- **Leadership:** Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups
- **Change catalyst:** initiating or managing change
- **Building bonds:** Nurturing instrumental relationships
- **Collaboration and cooperation:** Working with others toward shared goals
- **Team capabilities:** Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals.

APPENDIX 3. TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE OF TEACHERS

Teacher	Family	Age	Position before illness	Current position	School location
Rachel	Matthew, Hannah, Michael	46	French, GNVQ Health and Care	Self-employed	urban
Ralph	Gina, Fiona and Paul	46	Humanities, Head of Year 8/9	Industry	town
Jonathon	Jo	44	Business HoD. GNVQ	Still in post	urban
Marcus	Pauline	50	French,	Part-time	town
Rebecca		45	English HoD	Self-employed	urban
Maureen	Graham	51	Art.	Self-employed	town
Luke	Shirley	37	Math. Second in dept	Class teacher	urban
Margot	Stuart	42	Art	Still in post	urban
Stephen	Jenny,	50	Mathematics GNVQ, IT	IT technician	town
Andrew	Sarah	44	Science	Changed school	urban
Alex	Angie	37	Science, Second in dept	Still in post	urban
Gareth	Marjorie	57	Science, part- time	Christian Ministry	town
Celia	Hector,	36	Music, sole in dept.	Music therapy	urban
William	Lindsey	51	HoD Science	Lab technician	urban

Sally	Ivor	38	English	N/A	urban
Jessica	Frank	45	Home economics	New school, sole in dept.	urban
Morag		26	Art	N/A	urban
Terence	Alicia	50	Geography, Deputy Head	Charity Manager	urban
Charlotte	Daniel	47	Drama	N/A	town
Emily	Robert	51	Science	N/A	urban
Edward	Olivia	51	Science	Charity manager	town

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